

MY FAVORITE QUOTATIONS

A Familiar Evening with John Bartlett

A New Play

By Tom Attea

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CHARACTERS

(In order of appearance)

John Bartlett, Age 35, with the first edition of *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*

John Bartlett, Age 65, preparing the 9th Edition of his book

Guest Actor, reading quotes entered since Bartlett's death in 1905

ACT I

Bookstore at Harvard University, owned and operated at this time by the self-educated John Bartlett

ACT II

Bartlett's office at the publisher Little Brown & Company, where he has become a senior partner

ACT III

A podium

Times:

ACT I: 1855

ACT II: 1905

ACT III: The Present

Note on the production: Since the evening is intended as a delightful and informed celebration of the world's most famous book of quotations, the actual source of the quoted material throughout is the most copious version, which is the latest or 17th Edition.

ACT I

It is 1855, and John Bartlett is the young, energetic, and self-educated proprietor of The Harvard University Bookstore, where he apprenticed and which he then purchased. When we meet him, he is a young man enthusiastically in possession of an advance copy of the first edition of what will become the most famous quotation book of all time: *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*. He also has, as props to create business, his original notebook, on which he based the work, and, scattered about, many of the books and notes he used to create his proud accomplishment.

As we shall soon learn, he is eager to share a generous selection from the work.

JOHN BARTLETT

Good evening. John Bartlett here.

(holds up notebook)

I started this notebook of familiar quotations for my more literary customers at the Harvard University Bookstore. Got a job here as an apprentice a number of years ago and liked the place so much I found a way to buy it. Not bad for a self-educated man, eh? I started the notebook as a convenient way for me to offer an apt quotation when a customer asked what might little piece of wit or wisdom might be suitable for one occasion or another. And what do you know? Over time it grew and grew into this hefty item. I imagine it served its purpose well. I hear that for some time the saying on campus, when it comes to who said what, has been, "Ask John Bartlett."

(points around at the books everywhere, with pages marked in various ways)

If truth be told, all I have done, to paraphrase a quote I'll get to later, is gather "a posie of other men's flowers, and nothing but the thread that binds them is mine own." Fact is, I gathered so many that a substantial number of my customers suggested I might turn them into a regular book. I don't want to surprise you, but the more I thought about the idea, the more I liked it. And look what we have here, fresh off the press.

(lifts up bound version of the first edition)

The first, and let's hope not the last, edition of *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations* – a compendium of what, in Pope's words is, "what oft was thought, but ne'er so well

express'd." I trust you'll forgive me if you notice that I've omitted some quotations you're particularly fond of.

To bring some order to my collection, I arranged the material in simple chronological order, from the dawn of recorded human expression right down some of the more fortuitous latest examples of it. There's a lot of ground to cover, but I trust you'll find the journey worthy of your time and attention.

Just before I get going, I should mention that my wife helped me quite a lot with the book. So I must include her fondest wish. She has asked me to note that, while writers for most of human history often spoke of "man" and "mankind," in reference to the entirety of the human race, we here mean it very specifically to include womankind. And as we go on we'll get to quite a few distinguished quotes from that half of the human family. Now, down to business.

(opens book and begins; as he introduces, presents, or comments on the quotations, he paces, sits, sips a beverage, and does other physical tasks to add interest and humanity to his always keen and witty presentation)

Let's begin right at the very beginning, with a selection from ancient Egypt. It's taken from a work called the *Maxims of Ptahotpe*, which was written circa 2350 B. C. I'm especially fond of it because it comes as a relief from the usual Egyptian obsession with death and the afterlife, such as you find in their slightly later and better-known *The Book of the Dead*. Here's the brief and happy quote: "Be cheerful while you are alive." I'm glad some folks were way back then, when human life had so few enhancements and protections against the sudden advent of mortality, although I'm not sure how cheerful the commonalty could've been, hauling stones for the pyramids.

Now, let's go to the much more familiar *Old Testament*, the earliest parts of which actually date from the 10th Century B. C. And what do you know? We actually find, among the innumerable familiar quotations you've undoubtedly known since childhood, one that's along the same lines as the Egyptian injunction. I've taken it from the *Authorized King James Version*, which came our way relatively recently, in 1611 A. D. The quote is, "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."

I have quite a few more quotes from *The Bible*; it's understandably one of my foremost sources. But you know it so well yourselves, we won't dwell here extensively.

Tonight let me move right to *The New Testament*, where I'd like to quote some things that reveal, I think, a much underappreciated continuity with my two previous sources: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." And, of course, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." We might also note that it's here we find the ringing exclamation, "The truth shall make you free."

Now, let's come way down to The Seven Sages of Antiquity, who lived circa 650 to 550 B. C. Most famously, we have the inscription that greeted pilgrims at the temple of Delphi, as reported in Plutarch's *Morals*. It's the well-known encouragement toward what may be an entirely impossible achievement: "Know thyself."

There's another piece of wisdom already extant that will finally come down to us as The Golden Rule, which might well be the most steady guide for an equable life. We find it in *The Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, by one Diogenes Laertius. Here it is, in all its insightful simplicity: "Nothing too much." Later, it will be expressed by numerous authors, including that ancient incarnation of rationality itself, Aristotle, as, "Nothing in excess."

It's now 440 B. C., and here comes a fellow named Heraclitus. While only a few fragments of his thought survive, we can tell just from them that he deserves to be regarded, as he is, as legendarily astute. Here, for your delectation, are three of his better-known sayings: "All is flux, nothing stays still." Second, a thought that says the same thing with an unforgettable image: "You could not step twice into the same rivers; for other waters are ever flowing on to you." And last, the insight every dramatist and storyteller has used as his guiding principal since the dawn of the narrative art: "A man's character is his fate." Yep, if I may interject, the voyage is not so much about the boat, but the captain, and especially how he handles rough water, as well as safe harbor.

Now, we're near the golden age of ancient Greece, to which a great deal of subsequent Western philosophy is, in the words of the English mathematician and philosopher Alfred North Whitehead, "a series of footnotes to Plato." Let's begin with the man considered the greatest ruler of ancient Athens, Pericles, from whom we have a famous funeral oration that could be a model of speechmaking for any contemporary politico. It was first recorded by the famous Greek historian, Thucydides, but we have taken it from Plutarch's *Lives*: "Wait for the wisest of all counselors, Time." Pericles also comments on what our own personal loss and war teach us: "Trees, though they are cut and lopped, grow up again quickly, but if men are destroyed, it is not easy to get them again."

Now, let's sample the invaluable intellectual heritage of ancient Greece, with a poignant lament for all that has been lost, not only through the collapse of the Roman Empire and the relative indifference of the Dark Ages to these intellectual glories, but also attributable to that most regrettable of ancient catastrophes, the burning of the great library at Alexandria.

First, we'll listen to the Greek dramatists. That decision immediately brings us to Sophocles, the man who, while often full of heaviness in his own heart, drew men, in his own words, as reported by the relative youngster Aristotle, "... as they ought to be, and Euripides as they were." Let's take a quote from him that is, to my mind, an inviting

precursor of the central lesson of the *New Testament*, as well as the heart of just about every love song: “One word frees us of all the weight and pain of life: That word is love.” It’s from Sophocles’ play *Oedipus at Colonus*.

Next, a bit of wit from his younger counterpart, Euripides: “Talk sense to a fool and he calls you foolish.”

Next, let’s turn to the first, and generally regarded as the greatest, of Greek historians, Herodotus, who apparently knew that one day we’d have a post office here in the new world that was in sore need of a slogan: “Not snow, no, not rain, nor heat, nor night keeps them from accomplishing their appointed courses with all speed.” That was said about 400 B. C. He also gives us perhaps the saddest irony of war: “In peace, children inter their parents; war violates the order of nature and causes parents to inter their children.” Now, let’s hear him in a lighter vein: “If a man insisted always on being serious, and never allowed himself a bit of fun and relaxation, he would go mad or become unstable without knowing it.” “Unstable without knowing it?” Well, I guess that’s about as good as the current definitions of being unbalanced.

Here’s a tidbit from a fellow named Agis. It’s the most telling comment I can imagine about the legendary courage of the Spartans: “The Lacedemonians are not wont to ask how many the enemy are, but where they are.” Always amused me that these tough folks had a second name that began with the delicate syllable, “Lace.”

From war to wisdom, here’s Socrates himself, apart from his role as Plato’s principal interlocutor on behalf of truth. This we find, once again, in the *Lives* by Diogenes Laertius: “Often when looking at a mass of things for sale, he would say to himself, “How many things I have no need of!”

About the same time, we find the much revered father of physicians everywhere, Hippocrates, and his famous Hippocratic oath, in which we read: “... I will use treatment to help the sick according to my ability and judgment, but never with a view to injury and wrongdoing.” Surprisingly, it’s not until his *Epidemics* that we find the most renowned passage: “As to diseases make a habit of two things – to help, or at least, to do no harm.” “... at least, to do no harm?” Seems to have a wider application than medicine, doesn’t it? He also said something which the noblest souls called to that distinguished profession have found the greatness of heart for: “Sometimes give your services for nothing, calling to mind a previous benefaction or present satisfaction ... For where there is love of man, there is also love of the art.” He also said a few interesting things about subjects other than the medical art, such as, “Time is that wherein there is opportunity, and opportunity is that wherein there is no great time.” Finally, “Things that are holy are revealed only to men who are holy.”

At approximately the same time, we have that second of great Greek historians, the Athenian, Thucydides, and his cornerstone work, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, where we are fortunate to find, in its entirety, the *Funeral Oration of Pericles*, which includes a very fitting description of democracy: “Our constitution is named a democracy, because it is in the hands not of the few but of the many. But our laws secure equal justice for all in their private disputes, and our public opinion welcomes and honors talent in every branch of achievement, not for any sectional reason but on grounds of excellence alone. And as we give free play to all in our public life, so we carry the same spirit into our daily relations with one another.... Open and friendly in our private intercourse, in our public acts we keep strictly within the control of law. We acknowledge the restraint of reverence; we are obedient to whosoever is set in authority, and to the laws, more especially to those which offer protection to the oppressed and those unwritten ordinances whose transgression brings admitted shame.” How long wise things have been said that yet remain ideals, as opposed to our concordant reality.

Now, let’s turn to the comic dramatist Aristophanes, who knew way back then, “These impossible women! How they do get around us! The poet was right: we can’t live with them, or without them!”

Time now for Plato, that great yet unassuming philosophical litigator for truth and justice. Let us begin with his most famous passage, which brings into relief the somewhat deficient politics of our own age: “Until philosophers are kings, or the kings and princes of this world have the spirit and power of philosophy, and political greatness and wisdom meet in one, and those commoner natures who pursue either to the exclusion of the other are compelled to stand aside, cities will never have rest from their evils – no, nor the human race, as I believe – and then only will this our State have a possibility of life and behold the light of day.” Well, I suppose it’s not entirely unreasonable that a philosopher would finally decide the only way to get things right is to get a philosopher elected.

Here we have an echo of what Plato undoubtedly discovered, to his own frustration: “The partisan, when he is engaged in a dispute, cares nothing about the rights of the question, but is anxious only to convince his hearers of his own assertions.” I personally like this nourishing insight of his into early education, had we but the wisdom not to bury the characters of our children under a mountain of facts: “Let early education be a sort of amusement; you will then be better able to find out the natural bent.”

Let’s finish with three more quotes from him, two about tyrants and the third perhaps the best expression of natural justice ever to haunt the wayward conscience of man. “The people have always some champion whom they set over them and nurse into greatness.... This and no other is the root from which a tyrant springs; when he first appears he is a protector.” Then, “When the tyrant has disposed of foreign enemies by conquest or treaty, and there is nothing to fear from them, then he is always stirring up some war or other, in order that the people may require a leader.” Last, natural justice for him, as well

as for all of us: “The greatest penalty of evildoing – namely, to grow into the likeness of bad men.” Or, in simpler terms, we become what we do. Soak a sponge in vinegar, and you’ll be full of it; in honey, how sweet.

Next, comes Plato’s prize pupil, Aristotle, who taught, among others, Alexander the Great, and might have been killed by him, if he had not had the discretion to make a timely flight. How often have we wished that Socrates had had the wisdom to flee the corrupt government that condemned him to death, so that he might have saved his centuries of admirers from the heritage of his hemlock suicide, or his friends the resourcefulness to have knocked the recalcitrant soul out and carried him off.

We begin our visit with Aristotle with another preview of love as it applies to ethics. Here it is as recorded by one of my fellow ancient connoisseurs of the quotable, Diogenes Laertius: “We should behave to our friends as we would wish our friends to behave to us.”

Here’s a thought from him about democracy: “Democracy arises out of the notion that those who are equal in any respect are equal in all respects; because men are equally free, they claim to be absolutely equal.”

From his *On the Parts of Animals*, we have one of the early appreciations of the wonder of the natural world, even though in his experience the daily life nature delivered up was much harder than it is for us. “In all things of nature there is something of the marvelous.”

Aristotle was, we think, the most unremitting advocate of reason to grace the human race. How often he advises us with urgent frequency that life according to reason is the way to happiness. Here we have an expression of his very high standard of achievement: “If happiness is activity in accordance with excellence, it is reasonable that it should be in accordance with the highest excellence.” He also addresses one of the greatest riddles of existence, that is, how can blood and guts produce consciousness. For now, we must simply say that that’s what the brain does. He tells us about its role: “To be conscious that we are perceiving or thinking is to be conscious of our own existence.” Sounds remarkably like Descartes’ familiar, “Cogito, ergo sum,” doesn’t it? Aristotle also gives us, “The actuality of thought is life.”

I was going to include the thought from his *Physics* about how the universe is in motion, so there must be something that put it in motion, or what he called “The first mover” and the “unmoved mover,” as his description of God, but I’m not sure the answer to the ultimate riddle has to do with the what or how of existence, but more likely with the why of it. I mean, do you ever just sit back and ask yourself the astonishing question, “Why is there something instead of nothing?”

Well, that's it for our wise old counselors, Plato and Aristotle. With every contact with them, one is amazed at their devotion to intellectual achievement. I do, however, think they missed the boat on one thing, and the absence of it has, to my mind, been the source of untold human grief. I wish they had at some point realized that none of the values they deliberated would exist – not justice, nor truth, nor wisdom, not even love, nor any value worth discussing – without that precious and much underrated foundational value, life itself.

Now, let's take a short break from Western Civilization and head East, where, circa 200 B. C., we meet up with the Chinese philosopher Mencius, who observes: "When one by force subdues men, they do not submit to him in heart. They submit, because their strength is not adequate to resist." Sounds sort of like an ancestor of that calculating Venetian, Machiavelli, doesn't he? Here's another observation of Mencius', to call to mind as our minds wander about the stars: "The path of duty lies in what is near, and man seeks for it in what is remote." In my own contemplations, I sometimes think, the bigger we discover things are, way out there among the stars, the more important the little things become, like smiling at a neighbor or giving your spouse a kiss.

Here's a fellow named Sun-tzu, who tells us confidently, "Victorious warriors win first and then go to war, while defeated warriors go to war first and then seek to win." And, more compassionately, "The best victory is when the opponent surrenders of its own accord before there are any actual hostilities.... It is best to win without fighting."

Ah, well, war eternal. Let's go West now, where we find, born in 341 B. C., the Greek philosopher Epicurus, perhaps the most misreported ancient fellow of all, whose thoughts are often confounded with the mere quest for pleasure; actually, he was apparently quite an astringent person, who only recommended pleasure to the extent that it provided relief from pain. My, we might allow ourselves a bit more than that. Here he is, on his favorite topic: "It is impossible to live pleasurably without living wisely, well, and justly, and impossible to live wisely, well, and justly without living pleasurably." He also said other penetrating things that make we wish more of his works had survived. For example, on that from which only life can certainly offer us a sure consolation, death: "Death is nothing to us, since when we are, death has not come, and when death has come, we are not." That is, since death appears to be the loss of consciousness, it's actually not an experience, but only something the living observe. Well, heavens, it that's true, life itself must be the only experience!

Before we leave the legacy of the ancient Greeks, here we have one Theophrastus: "Time is the most valuable thing a man can spend." Zeno next, a bit ahead of Rousseau's noble savage: "The goal of life is living in agreement with nature." And a couple of cautions from Bion, the first about how to brace yourself if you do happen to be or become wealthy: "He has not acquired a fortune; the fortune has acquired him." And for

children: “Though boys throw stones at frogs in sport, the frogs do not die in sport, but in earnest.” And one more parting thought from the Greeks, as an inspiration to late bloomers everywhere. Lacydes said, when asked late in life why he was studying geometry, “If I should not be learning now, when should I be?”

Now to the ancient Romans, where we begin with the dramatist Plautus, who was one of the first to discover, in his own words, “No guest is so welcome in a friend’s house that he will not become a nuisance after three days.”

Here’s a word to those who teach clear writing as the goal, instead of clear thinking, with writing as the mind’s dutiful stenographer. This from Cato the Elder: “Grasp the subject, the words will follow.”

A prescient thought by Statius: “He plants trees to benefit another generation.”

And a word from one Polybius, with a lesson every state seems to learn with regret: “Those who know how to win are much more numerous than those who know how to make proper use of their victories.”

Here’s our second Roman dramatist, Terence, who, among his many lighthearted trifles, managed to say such things as: “Moderation in all things.” “Extreme law is often extreme injustice.” “There is nothing so easy but that it becomes difficult when you do it reluctantly.” “Fortune helps the brave.” And now something he seems to have discovered about the inclinations of the fairer sex: “I know the disposition of women: when you will, they won’t; when you won’t, they set their hearts upon you of their own inclination.”

As we saunter through the ages, how about a brief thought about the conduct of empire. This from the Roman Lucius Accius: “Let them hate, so long as they fear.”

Lest we leave the East entirely behind us, here is a tender song of loss from a Chinese poet named Han Wu-ti:

The sound of her silk skirt has stopped.
On the marble pavement dust grows.
Her empty room is cold and still.
Fallen leaves are piled against the doors.
Longing for that lovely lady
How can I bring my aching heart to rest?

The truth must be admitted. The heartsick fellow is referring to the death of his mistress.

Now, the great orator and statesman, Cicero, who, unfortunately, stuck his head out of the carriage he was fleeing in, only to have it lopped off by his pursuers. Luckily for us, he

had by then lived a long and wonderfully productive life. Cicero encourages us to aim at “the highest good,” or, in Latin, the well-known *Summum bonum*. He also tells us, “The people’s good is the highest law.” Consoles us with, “While there’s life, there’s hope.” Contemplates his own studies, as, “These studies are a spur to the young, a delight to the old; an ornament in prosperity, a consoling refuge in adversity; they are pleasure for us at home, and no burden abroad; they stay up with us at night, they accompany us when we travel, they are with us in our country visits.” As our final selection from him, he states, perhaps as well as it’s ever been stated, the values of history: “History is the witness that testifies to the passing of time; it illumines reality, vitalizes memory, provides guidance in daily life, and brings us tidings of antiquity.”

Now, let’s hear from a Renaissance man who predated that glorious rebirth of civilization by a century and a half, the ancient Roman Lucretius – poet, philosopher, and scientist – who said, among many other wonders of the ancient intellect: “Material objects are of two kinds, atoms and compounds of atoms. The atoms themselves cannot be swamped by any force, for they are preserved indefinitely by their absolute solidity.” And, on an entirely different subject, the fear of what may await us after death: “That fear of Acheron be sent packing which troubles the life of man from its deepest depths, suffuses all with the blackness of death, and leaves no delight clean and pure.”

From the great Roman poet Virgil, let us take simply this injunction from his *Minor Poems*, something oft stated but always well to remind ourselves of: “Death twitches my ear. ‘Live,’ he says, ‘I am coming.’”

Now, from easeful Horace, we have: “We rarely find anyone who can say he has lived a happy life, and who, content with his life, can retire from the world like a satisfied guest.” And then to Horace again, as recorded by way of another ancient collector of quotations, Publius Syrus: “The fear of death is more to be dreaded than death itself.” And this encouragement to all those who have been prejudged by others or arbitrarily limited by themselves: “No one knows what he can do till he tries.”

Next we have, from the wonderfully imaginative poet Ovid, this quite logical encouragement in the art of love: “To be loved, be lovable.”

Now, we’re about to go from B. C. to A. D. Here one Hillel anticipates the central life-enhancing injunction of *The New Testament*: “What is hateful to you do not do to your neighbor. That is the whole Torah. The rest is commentary.”

About the same time the philosopher Seneca advises us: “It is quality rather than quantity that matters.” And, “It is a rough road that leads to the heights of greatness.”

Now, we have a fellow who was born at the very beginning of the A. D. era, the Roman Pliny the Elder, who observed what we all sadly learn: “With man, most of his misfortunes are occasioned by man.”

Next, that great soul of a Roman emperor and general, the stoic Marcus Aurelius, who wrote his moving and consoling *Meditations* from his imperial tent, as he patrolled and defended the borders of the Empire. The only blameworthy act he ever did was to appoint his disastrously shallow son Commodus to succeed him, and what unfortunate repercussions for the Romans and for us all. Here, from the vast peace of Aurelius’ mind, we have two quotes. Listen. One can almost hear him breathing, even in translation: “All that is harmony for you, my Universe, is in harmony with me as well. Nothing that comes at the right time for you is too early or too late for me. Everything is fruit to me that your seasons bring, Nature. All things come of you, have their being in you, and return to you.” And, on self-reliance, very significantly before Emerson, “The universe is change; our life is what our thoughts make it.”

Here now is a hard-edged piece of pragmatism from Vegetius: “Let him who desires peace prepare for war.”

At this time, let’s consult *The Talmud*, which was compiled about the sixth century A. D. What ironic blessedness we find in the unwillingness of the author to harm another. “Whoever destroys a single life is as guilty as though he had destroyed the entire world; and whoever rescues a single life earns as much merit as though he had rescued the entire world.”

About the same time, Muhammad set down his *Koran*, where we find, amid much narrow-minded and inflammatory rhetoric, this disastrously neglected passage: “We believe in God, and that which has been sent down on us and sent down on Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac and Jacob, and the Tribes, and that which was given to Moses and Jesus and the Prophets, of their Lord; we make no divisions between any of them, and to Him we surrender.” Muhammad also tells us, “Surely God wrongs not men, but themselves men wrong.” By the way, the literal translation of the word “Islam” is “surrender.”

At this point in my book of quotations, I decided to insert a selection from that frequent ancient author, “Anonymous.” From the Chinese, “Keep a green tree in your heart and perhaps the singing bird will come.” And from the Latin: “Legal justice is the art of the good and the fair.” “The good and the fair.” Simple enough; then why is the law so confoundedly complex? Does attention to detail demand garrulity?

Averroes, the great Muslim scholar – yes, there were in ancient times many – advises us, in mid-12th Century, about what has become the usual definition of what constitutes truth, at least on a human scale: “Knowledge is the conformity of the object and the intellect.”

About the same time, Maimonides takes a stand for the truth in another area, telling us with some impatience, “Astrology is a disease, not a science.” Hope that piece of well-aged frankness hasn’t bruised any tender soul out there too much.

Here’s a bit of frankness of a different order and, from all people, a saint, Bonaventure by name: “An example from the monkey: The higher it climbs, the more you see of its behind.”

Moving now way down in the 13th Century to Roger Bacon, who tells us, somewhat ahead of Francis by the same name, “If in other sciences we should arrive at certainty without doubt and truth without error, it behooves us to place the foundation of knowledge in mathematics.”

Not entirely willing to accept the way things have turned out, mathematically based or otherwise, Alfonso the Wise claims, “Had I been present at the creation, I would have given some useful hints for the better ordering of the universe.” Question is, who would have accepted his suggestions and would we have been better off?

Here’s Dante, who, in the vast imaginative tableau of his *Divine Comedy*, actually manages to give a bit of basic advice for the betterment of students everywhere: “He listens well who takes notes.”

And now we begin to see a more human view of life, as we find ourselves in the middle of the 14th Century, in the hands of the cheerful and often bawdy Mr. Chaucer. I have taken a few pages of quotes from his tales, but I am especially fond of this, as it applies to my own endeavors. It’s from his *Parliament of Fowls*:

For out of old feldes, as men seyth,
Cometh all this newe corn fro yer to yere;
And out of olde bokes, in good feyth,
Cometh al this newe science that men lere.”

And from his *Troilus and Creseyde*, I’ll mention the hopeful thought:

For I have seyn, of a ful misty morwe
Folowen ful often a myrie, someris day.

At this time in our voyage, the new world opens up, as we hear from Christopher Columbus, in an abstract of his *Journal of the First Voyage*, prepared by one Bartolome De Las Casas: “Here the people could stand it no longer and complained of the long voyage; but the Admiral cheered them on as best he could, holding out good hope of the advantages they would have. He added that it was useless to complain, he had come [to go] to the Indies, and so had to continue it until he found them, with the help of Our Lord.” Later in the *Journal*, we hear about the great occasion: “At two hours after

midnight appeared the land, at a distance of 2 leagues. They handed all sails and set the *treo*, which is the mainsail without bonnets, and lay-to waiting for daylight Friday, when they arrived at an island of the Bahamas that was called in the Indians' tongue Guanahani [San Salvador].”

Meanwhile, back in the Old World, Leonardo da Vinci was saying, “Life well spent is long.” And, “As a well-spent day brings happy sleep, so life well used brings happy death.” And then, with an allusion as to why he turned his hand, at times, from art to mechanical creations, he informs us that, “Mechanics is the paradise of the mathematical sciences because by means of it one comes to the fruits of mathematics.”

The somewhat younger but anything but idealistic Machiavelli now advises Caesar Borgia on, what he considers, the survival tactics of a prince: “There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things.” And, harking back to a imperial Roman realization, “Since love and fear can hardly exist together, if we must choose between them, it is far safer to be feared than loved.”

Lest we think that all the people of his age were Machiavellian, let us turn to his slightly younger contemporary, the Frenchman Rabelais, who in his raucous laugh of a giant tome *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, he finds a moment to reflect on, of all things, the conduct of science: “Wisdom entereth not into a malicious mind, and science without conscience is but the ruin of the soul.”

Staying among the French, we now arrive at that most copious of essayists, Montaigne, who himself had, as I apparently do, a penchant for old sayings, quite of few of which he had inscribed on the ceiling of his library. First, let us allow him to state his discreet approach: “I speak the truth, not my fill of it, but as much as I dare speak; and I dare to do so a little more as I grow old.” Then he goes on to tell us, and brace yourselves: “Nothing is so firmly believed as what is least known.” “Man is certainly crazy. He could not make a mite, and he makes gods by the dozen.” “My trade and art is living.” “He who would teach men to die would teach them to live.” “Wherever your life ends, it is all there. The advantage of living is not measured by length, but by use; some men have lived long, and lived little; attend to it while you are in it. It lies in your will, not in the number of years, for you to have lived enough.” And, “Let us give Nature a chance; she knows her business better than we do.” Finally, here’s a thought I referred to at the start of the evening, which captures precisely my own practice: “I have here only made a nosegay of culled flowers, and have brought nothing of my own but the thread that ties them together.”

Now let’s turn to what is perhaps the soundest advice a writer ever gave himself. It’s, of course, Sir Philip Sidney, the English poet, telling himself, with noticeable impatience, “‘Fool!’ said my muse to me, ‘look in thy heart, and write.’”

Here now is the other Bacon, Francis, born 1561, with his great charter of science, *Novum Organum*, published 1620. “There are and can be only two ways of searching into and discovering truth. The one flies from the senses and particulars to the most general axioms... this way is now in fashion. The other derives axioms from the senses and particulars, rising by a gradual and unbroken ascent, so that it arrives at the most general axioms last of all. This is the true way, but as yet untried.” In his other writings, he also gives us the famous, “Knowledge is power.” As well as, “If a man will begin with certainties, he shall end in doubts; but if he will be content to begin with doubts he shall end in certainties.” Notice the latter statement does not come with a guarantee. Bacon also tells us that, “Nothing doth more hurt in a state than that cunning men pass for wise.” And about reading we’re told the well-anthologized observations, “Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested.” “Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man.” And, as our final selection from him, “Histories make men wise; poets, witty; the mathematics, subtile [sic]; natural philosophy, deep; moral, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend.”

At this point, our vista opens up even wider than the new world, to the true progress of the heavens, in what Galileo is alleged to have whispered after recanting before the Inquisition his claim that the earth revolved around the sun: “But it does move!”

Now Christopher Marlowe, the English poet, who, as a young man, was unfortunately killed in a brawl. How melodiously his oft-responded love ditty moves along:

Come live with me, and be my love;
And we will all the pleasures prove
That valleys, groves, hills, and fields,
Woods or steepy mountain yields.

Need we add his ringing words on Helen:

Was this the face that launched a thousand ships,
And Burnt the topless towers of Ilium?

And here we arrive at that bard with a fancy “high fantastical,” William Shakespeare,” who will merit more pages in my book of quotations than any other single author. In fact, I am planning, separately, a concordance of his complete works. For now, let me quote the most famous rumination, then a lovely sonnet about – what else but? – love, and finally a few choice bits. First, from Hamlet, perhaps the best-known extended quote of the evening:

To be, or not to be; that is the question:
Whether ‘tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die: to sleep;
No more; and, by a sleep to say we end

The heartache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation

Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;
To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despiz'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
No traveler returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.

On the more cheerful occasion, this love sonnet:
Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alternation finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
Oh, no! it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error, and upon me prov'd,

I never writ, nor no man ever lov'd.
 And briefly, from various works of his:
 The naked, poor and mangled Peace,
 Dear nurse of arts, plenties, and joyful births.

How much better is it to weep at joy than to joy at weeping!

I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face:
 I had rather lie in the woolen.

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
 Thou art not so unkind
 As man's ingratitude.

To hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature, to
 Show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image,
 And the very age and body of the time his form and
 pressure.

I am sure care's an enemy of life.

The sense of death is most in apprehension,
 And the poor beetle, that we tread upon,
 In corporal sufferance finds a pang as great
 As when a giant dies.

Truth is truth
 To the end of reckoning.

To mourn a mischief that is past and gone
 Is the next way to draw new mischief on.

The worst is not,
 So long as we can say, "This is the worst."

Men must endure
 Their going hence, even as their coming hither;
 Ripeness is all.

Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more!
 Macbeth does murder sleep," the innocent sleep,

Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,
 The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath,
 Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
 Chief nourisher in life's feast.

It – that is, drink – provokes the desire, but it takes away
 the performance.

In nature's infinite book of secrecy
 A little can I read.

O brave new world,
 That has such people in't!

And finally:

Heat not a furnace for your foe so hot
 That it do singe yourself.

And from those flights, back down to earth, rock solid reality, in fact, from Tommaso Campanella, an early voice of science, in his *Defense of Galileo*. “The new philosophy proceeds from the world, the book of God.” Or, as others have called the practice: “Reading nature backwards.”

And here we go, right back up to fancy, with John Donne, who was early a lover and late a divine:

Love, all alike, no season knows, nor clime,
 Nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time.

And:

'Tis true, 'tis day; what though it be?
 O wilt thou therefore rise from me?
 Why should we rise, because 'tis light?
 Did we lie down, because 'twas night?
 Love which in spite of darkness brought us hither
 Should in despite of light keep us together.

Now a bit of daring, especially for a man who would later join the clergy:

Full nakedness! All joys are due to thee,
 As souls unbodied, bodies unclothed must be,
 To taste whole joys.

Now, a change for the clerical:

Death be not proud, though some have called thee
 Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so,
 For those whom thou think'st thou dost over-throw
 Die not, poor death, nor yet canst thou kill me.

Last, here's that most familiar quote from him, and if only the wide world knew the truth of it: "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friends or of thine own were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."

Here's a great friend of Shakespeare's, Ben Jonson, who tells us: "I loved the man and do honor his memory, on this side idolatry, as much as any." And, of course, "He was not of an age but for all time."

Here's we have that wonderful image from the poet Robert Herrick, who was alive when Shakespeare was.

A sweet disorder in the dress
Kindles in clothes a wantonness.

And from Mr. Herrick to Mr. Herbert, who observes: "Love and cough cannot be hid." "The mill cannot grind with water that's past." And his most famous *bon mot* of all: "Living well is the best revenge."

Now, we come to a man who was born at the beginning of the 17th Century, Mr. Pedro Calderon de la Barca, who gave us *Life is a Dream*. Yet he does relent enough to tell us, "But whether it be a dream or truth, to do well is what matters. If it be truth, for truth's sake. If not, then to gain friends for the time when we awaken."

At this juncture of history, the New World begins to make more of an appearance in writing. Here is Roger Williams in his *Letter to the Town of Providence*, in January 1655, already awash in what would come to be known as "the melting pot." Listen to his call for tolerance: "There goes many a ship to sea, with many hundred souls in one ship, whose weal and woe is common, and is a true picture of a commonwealth or a human combination or society. It hath fallen out sometimes that both Papists and Protestants, Jews and Turks may be embarked in one ship; upon which supposal I affirm that all the liberty of conscience that ever I pleaded for turns upon these two hinges – that none of the papists, Protestants, Jews or Turks be forced to come to the ship's prayers or worship, nor compelled from their own particular prayers or worship, if they practice any."

Here is Sir Thomas Browne, another early voice of science, voicing its long disagreement with religion: "As for those wingy mysteries in divinity, and airy subtleties in religion, which have unhinged the brains of better heads, they never stretched the *pia mater* of mine."

Now, to Milton, dear blind singer, who found sweetness in philosophy, to wit:

How charming is divine philosophy!
 Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
 But musical as is Apollo's lute,
 And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets
 Where no crude surfeit reigns.

In *Paradise Lost*, he found time to tell us:

A mind not to be chang'd by place or time.
 The mind is its own place, and in itself
 Can make a heav'n of hell, a hell of heav'n.

In the same work, he found use for the phrase, "A heaven on earth." Expressed the inviting thought, "Imparadis'd in one another's arms." And commented, "Accuse not Nature, she hath done her part; Do thou but thine."

On to Sir John Suckling, for one of the most off-handed fillips we have about love:

Out upon it, I have loved
 Three whole days together;
 And am like to love three more,
 If it prove fair weather.

Being a bit more pragmatic, we have the soul of French insight, La Rochefoucauld, who informs us: "We have strength enough to endure the misfortunes of others." As well as, "Everyone complains of his memory, and no one complains of his judgment."

Now, to that mellifluous poet Marvell, and his

Had we but world enough and time,
 This coyness, lady, were no crime.

Apparently, failing with indirectness, he ups the ante: "

Then worms shall try
 That long preserved virginity,
 And your quaint honor turn to dust,
 And into ashes all my lust.
 The grave's a fine and private place,
 But none, I think, do there embrace.

Here is perhaps the slickest expression of skepticism we have; it's from one Anthony Ashley Cooper, 1st Earl of Shaftesbury, addressing a woman who has obviously made an intimidating inquiry as to his religion. The Earl tells her: "People differ in their discourse and profession about these matters, but men of sense are really but of one religion." Upon which says the lady of a sudden, "Pray, my lord, what religion is that which men of sense agree in?" "Madam," says the earl immediately, "men of sense never tell it."

The Frenchman “of infinite jest,” Moliere sighs in one of his plays, “We die only once, and for such a long time!” In another, he cautions us, “To create a public scandal is what’s wicked; to sin in private is not a sin.” I assume he’s leaving out murder in private. Finally, he has a character, who is obviously less than sophisticated, exclaim, “Good Heavens! For more than forty years I have been speaking prose without knowing it.”

Still rather close to Shakespeare’s time, we have another picturesque memory, this from John Aubrey: “Mr. William Shakespeare was born at Stratford upon Avon in the County of Warwick. His father was a butcher, and I have been told heretofore by some of the neighbors, that when he was a boy he exercised his father’s trade, but when he killed a calf he would do it in a high style and make a speech.”

One Richard Cumberland advises us, “It is better to wear out than to rust out.”

And Mr. Dryden chimes in on the same theme with:

Happy the man, and happy he alone,
He who can call today his own;
He who, secure within, can say,
Tomorrow, do they worst, for I have liv’d today.

The scientist van Leeuwenhoek takes a moment for what will become known, among the poets, as natural piety: “We cannot in any better manner glorify the Lord and Creator of the universe than that in all things, how small soever they appear to our naked eyes, but which have yet received the gift of life and power of increase, we contemplate the display of his omnificence and perfections with the utmost admiration.”

John Locke tells us, “No man’s knowledge here can go beyond his experience.” Then he considers the difficulty of passing along knowledge to others: “It is one thing to show a man that he is in an error, and another to put him in possession of the truth.”

Now, we come to the great Benedict Spinoza. I will allow you to read for yourselves his elaborate geometrical proof for the existence of God, in terms of matter infinitely extensible as a necessary perfection of the divine, and settle for a thought of his that occurs to me nearly every day: “All excellent things are as difficult as they are rare.”

Now, here’s a fellow tough with justice, George Savile, Marquess of Halifax: “Men are not hanged for stealing horses, but that horses may not be stolen.”

The great Newton, in a humble vein: “If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of Giants.” And, “I do not know what I may appear to the world; but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great

ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.” Considering the possibility of making silicon chips out of the sand, he was more correct on that seashore than he dreamed.

Here is Jean de La Bruyere, in quite a cynical mood: “There are but three events in a man’s life: birth, life and death. He is not conscious of being born, he dies in pain, and he forgets to live.” We note, however, that La Bruyere did not forget to write.

Another point about the brevity of life is made by a Frenchman named Fenelon: “Do not men die fast enough without being destroyed by each other? Can any man be insensible of the brevity of life? and can he who knows it think life too long?”

Let’s take a moment to smile with the songwriters in our audience. Here is Andrew Saltoun, who was the first to say what politicians may consider a blatant exaggeration: “If a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation.”

One John Vanbrugh informs us in his play *The Relapse*, “Once a woman has given you her heart you can never get rid of the rest of her.” Apparently, a wife can’t get rid of the husband, even when she might have occasion to, because Vanbrugh also tells us, “No man worth having is true to his wife, or can be true to his wife, or ever was, or ever will be so.” Hmm, I’m not sure every man can be found guilty.

Now, we find ourselves having come all the way to that inspired swig of Irish vinegar, Jonathan Swift, whose *Gulliver* is an inspiration to everyone who has ever felt tied down by a multitude of small-minded people. You can always sit up and watch them fly off, squealing. Let us, on this occasion, merely take from him the rather strange observation, “He was a bold man that first eat an oyster.”

About the same time, Alain Lesage observes something about women that even modern women aren’t likely to dispute: “The pleasure of talking is the inextinguishable passion of a woman, coeval with the act of breathing.”

And now for a serious turn by Giovanni Vico, who, in his *Scienza Nuova*, published in 1725, intimates evolution: “The nature of things is nothing other than that they come into being at certain times and in certain ways. Wherever the same circumstances are present, the same phenomena arise and no others.”

Having been a bookseller and editor for most of my life, I always especially enjoy observations about books. Here is Addison, in *The Spectator*, talking about those wonderfully preserved embodiments of human mental energy: “Books are the legacies that a great genius leaves to mankind, which are delivered down from generation to generation, as presents to the posterity of those who are yet unborn.” He also gives us a

specious rule for drinking: “Were I to prescribe a rule for drinking, it should be formed upon a saying quoted by Sir William Temple: the first glass for myself, the second for my friends, the third for good humor, and the fourth for mine enemies.”

One William Somerville believes in riches in relation to character a good deal more than propriety inclines us to:

Let all the learned say what they can,
‘Tis ready money makes the man.

And now we arrive at the poet most obsessed with couplet after couplet after couplet, and to great effect – Alexander Pope:

True wit is nature to advantage dress’d,
What oft was thought, but ne’er so well express’d.

Be not the first by whom the new are tried,
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.

True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learn’d to dance.
‘Tis not enough no harshness gives offense;
The sound must seem an echo to the sense.

Now, to Montesquieu and his *De l’Esprit des Loix*, with a lesson for those with an overly eager penchant for making laws: “Useless laws weaken the necessary laws.”

Philip Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, advises us about our estimate of those past and present, in his, “Speak of the moderns without contempt, and of the ancients without idolatry.”

Arriving now to the early 18th Century, we have one Francis Hutcheson anticipating Bentham’s Utilitarianism, with, “That action is best which procures the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers.” Jumping ahead a bit, you’ll recall the similarity of Jeremy Bentham’s principle: “The greatest happiness of the greatest number is the foundation of morals and legislation.” Were it only so in practice!

Here are two thoughts from that courageous but tactful skeptic, Voltaire. When the Inquisition was especially hot on his trail, he simply slipped across the border into Switzerland and build himself a chateau with a garden he loved to cultivate. He gives us his reason for the move: “I am very fond of truth, but not at all of martyrdom.” Of course, we have his satire on Leibniz, from *Candide*: “In this best of all possible worlds... everything is for the best.” A bit later a wit will ask, “If this is the best of all possible worlds, what must the other worlds be like?” Among Voltaire’s last words we

find the famous skeptic somewhat more accepting: “I die adorning God, loving my friends, not hating my enemies, and detesting superstition.”

Returning to our own shores, the pragmatic Franklin enters in his famous *Almanac*: “Three may keep a secret, if two of them are dead.” “Dost thou love life? Then do not squander time; for that’s the stuff life is made of.” At the signing of the Declaration of Independence, he was moved to say, “We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately.” Then in a letter to a lady, he regrets the eagle as the choice for our national symbol, in preference to a more festive bird: “I wish the bald eagle had not been chosen as the representative of our country; he is a bird of bad moral character... like those among men who live by sharpening and robbing, he is generally poor, and often very lousy... The turkey... is a much more respectable bird, and withal a true original native of America.” Finally, in a letter to a man, “Our new Constitution is now established, and has an appearance that promises permanency; but in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes.” I am not sure of that. It is at least as certain that most human beings are forever the dupes of three things: the promise of connubial bliss, enormous money, or eternal life.

As we get close to the American Revolution, we hear the Englishman William Pitt speaking with extraordinary pith. Listen to him in 1770, to The House of Lords: “I love the Americans because they love liberty, and I love them for the noble efforts they made in the last war.” And in a speech from 1777: “If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms – never – never – never! You cannot conquer America.”

Now we come to that witty lexicographer and ever-effusive blunderbuss, Samuel Johnson, who acknowledges that, “Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures.” Admits to, “The endearing elegance of female friendship.” My wife is especially fond of that quote. From Boswell’s *Life of Johnson*, we have: “It matters not how a man dies. But how he lives.” Apparently, as well as how he marries: “A gentleman who had been very unhappy in marriage, married immediately after his wife died: Johnson said, it was the triumph of hope over experience.” And on a subject even less promising, the famous words: “Depend upon it, sir, when a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully.”

Now the philosophical skeptic and prose stylist David Hume, who informs us: “Generally speaking, the errors in religion are dangerous; those in philosophy only ridiculous.” And, retreating into his own religion, “Opposing one species of superstition to another, set them a-quarreling; while we ourselves, during their fury and contention, happily make our escape into the calm, though obscure, regions of philosophy.”

Frederick the Great, who managed to be a successful general, as well as a patron of art, and who actually played a bit of music himself, reverts to the general with, “God is always with the strongest battalions.”

The 18th Century was quite gifted with genius; here’s Rousseau, who gave us the noble savage, along with this observation about the pioneering man: “The first man who, having fenced in a piece of land, said, ‘This is mine,’ and found people naïve enough to believe him, that man was the true founder of civil society.” Jean-Jacques was also tender enough to say, “What wisdom can you find that is greater than kindness?” Finally, in a familiar strain: “Nature never deceives us; it is always we who deceive ourselves.” But, then again, aren’t we part of nature?

His contemporary, the great Diderot, cautions us: “From fanaticism to barbarism is only one step.”

And from Horace Walpole, we have the very familiar: “This world is a comedy to those that think, a tragedy to those that feel.”

Here we have that most acute observer of the dynamics of economy, Adam Smith, who tells us in his *Wealth of Nations*: “Every individual necessarily labors to render the annual revenue of the society as great as he can. He generally indeed neither intends to promote the public interest, nor knows how much he is promoting it.... He intends only his own gain, and he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention.... By pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it. I have never known much good done by those who affected to trade for the public good.”

Rising to a high moral plane, Kant gives us his famous imperative: “There is ... only a single categorical imperative and it is this: Act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.” Promising enough, but I’d hate to have a villain deciding the matter.

The colonist George Mason, in the *Virginia Bill of Rights*, anticipates by almost a month the Constitution: “That all men are by nature equally free and independent, and have certain inherent rights, of which, when they enter into a state of society, they cannot by any compact deprive or divest their posterity; namely, the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety.” And, in the same: “Government is, or ought to be instituted for the common benefit, protection, and security of the people, nation, or community; of all the various modes and forms of government, that is best which is capable of producing the greatest degree of happiness and safety, and is most effectually secured against the danger of maladministration.”

And who knows who said, “Taxation without representation is tyranny.” It was one James Otis.

Who said at Bunker Hill, “Don’t one of you fire until you see the whites of their eyes.” William Prescott.

Meanwhile, back in Europe, Jacques Turgot baldly announced what we can only hope to live up to: “They [the Americans] are the hope of this world. They may become its model.”

Oliver Goldsmith encourages us with:

Hope, like the gleaming taper’s light,
Adorns and cheers our way;
And still, as darker grows the night,
Emits a brighter ray.

On an entirely different subject, he admits what is obvious to many a breath-catching man: “A modest woman, dressed out in all her finery, is the most tremendous object of the whole creation.”

We shall quote the great Edmund Burke a bit more than has lately been our penchant: “When bad men combine, the good must associate; else they will fall one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle.” On America, to the English Parliament: “Reflect how you are to govern a people who think they ought to be free, and think they are not. Your scheme yields no revenue; it yields nothing but discontent, disorder, disobedience; and such is the state of America, that after wading up to your eyes in blood, you could only end just where you begun; that is, to tax where no revenue is to be found, to – my voice fails me; my inclination indeed carries me no farther – all is confusion beyond it.” He goes on, in his *Second Speech on Conciliation with America*: “The use of force alone is but *temporary*. It may subdue for a moment; but it does not remove the necessity of subduing again: and a nation is not governed, which is perpetually to be conquered.” And: “I do not know the method of drawing up an indictment against an whole people.” Later, on economic reform: “Corrupt influence, which is itself the perennial spring of all prodigality, and of all disorder; which loads us, more than millions of debt; which takes away vigor from our arms, wisdom from our councils, and every shadow of authority and credit from the most venerable parts of our constitution.” Finally, the ringing attribution: “The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”

Now to Gotthold Lessing, who apparently knew what it is to have something upset him: “He who doesn’t lose his wits over certain things has no wits to lose.”

And now to the Minute Men at Lexington and who said, “Stand your ground. Don’t fire unless fired upon, but if they mean to have a war let it begin here”? It was John Parker.

Apparently, William Cowper had a friend with only the appearance of wit, as he tells us:
 His wit invites you by his looks to come,
 But when you knock it never is at home.

And now the grandfather of Charles Darwin, Erasmus Darwin, anticipates his grandson’s discovery in his own *Zoonomia*. “Would it be too bold to imagine, that in the great length of time, since the earth began to exist, perhaps millions of ages before the commencement of the history of mankind, would it be too bold to imagine, that all warm-blooded animals have arisen from one living filament which the Great First Cause endued with animality... and thus possessing the faculty of continuing to improve by its own inherent activity, and of delivering down those improvements by generation to its posterity, world without end.!” Apparently, Charles took the hint and sailed forth.

Now, we come to the high flame of the quest for an independent America, wherein we hear the handful of men whose great character and legacy have supplied the foundation on which we continue in this unprecedented experiment in democracy. Just before Washington, who was ever first among his countrymen, lets hear from Richard Henry Lee, in his Resolution moved at the Continental Congress, June 7, 1776, adopted July 2: “That these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown; and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved.”

Thence right to that great soul of the Revolution, to whose courage, wisdom, and character we do indeed owe this nation. Hear George Washington speaking, first and the general: “Discipline is the soul of an army. It makes small numbers formidable; procures success to the weak, and esteem for all.” And, “Let us therefore animate and encourage each other, and show the whole world that a Freeman, contending for liberty on his own ground, is superior to any slavish mercenary on earth.” And to the Continental Army before the battle of Long Island: “The time is now near at hand which must probably determine whether Americans are to be freemen or slaves; whether they are to have any property they can call their own; whether their houses and farms are to be pillaged and destroyed, and themselves consigned to a state of wretchedness from which no human efforts will deliver them. The fate of unborn millions will now depend, under God, on the courage and conduct of this army. Our cruel and unrelenting enemy leaves

us only the choice of brave resistance, or the most abject submission. We have, therefore, to resolve to conquer or die.” Now, from his First Inaugural Address: “The preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the republican model of government, are justly considered as deeply, perhaps as finally staked, on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people.” He also wrote in a letter to the president of Congress, “There is nothing that gives a man consequence, and renders him fit for command, like a support that renders him independent of everybody but the State he serves.” And in his Farewell Address, we find the generally disregarded cautions: “Let me now... warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party.” “Observe good faith and justice toward all nations. Cultivate peace and harmony with all... The Nation which indulges toward another an habitual hatred or an habitual fondness is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest.” “This our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances, with any portion of the foreign world.” “There can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation.” Now, his last words, December 14, 1799: “It is well, I die hard, but I am not afraid to go.”

Here’s his erudite contemporary, John Adams, in his second letter to his wife Abigail Adams, whom we shall hear from later. It concerns the adoption of the resolution for independence. The actual signing of the Declaration came, as you will hear, two days later: “The second day of July, 1776, will be the most memorable epoch in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forevermore.” Here he is, four years later, to Abigail: “I must study politics and war that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. My sons ought to study mathematics and philosophy, geography, natural history, naval architecture, navigation, commerce, and agriculture, in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture, statuary, tapestry, and porcelain.” And to Thomas Jefferson, in a letter: “You and I ought not to die before we have explained ourselves to each other.” Thirteen years later, in 1826, he and Jefferson both died, ironically enough, on July 4th. It was the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

Now, a glance back to Europe: Jean de Crevecoeur commented on us at the time: “What then is the American, this new man? He is either an European, or the descendant of an European, hence that strange mixture of blood, which you will find in no other country... Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labors and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world.”

Returning stateside, here's a word from the nothing if not impassioned Patrick Henry: "I am not a Virginian, but an American." Yet even now America is still so young, how many of us call ourselves Americans, without a hyphen to indicate heritage? It seems one only gets to be an American when he travels abroad. Here's Henry, in a speech to the Virginia Convention, March, 1775, and his famous peroration: "It is vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. The gentlemen may cry, Peace, peace! but there is no peace. The war has actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that the gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear or peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God. I know not what course others may take, be as for me, give me liberty or give me death!"

Returning to England, we have, about at the same time, Edward Gibbon finding the peace to write his famous history. Here he is at his incisive best: "The various modes of worship, which prevailed in the Roman world, were all considered by the people, as equally true; by the philosopher, as equally false; and by the magistrate, as equally useful."

In the colonies again, this time to hear Thomas Paine: "When we are planning for posterity, we ought to remember that virtue is not hereditary." Here's his famous, "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it *now*, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly; it is dearness only that gives everything its value. Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed, if so celestial an article as *Freedom* should not be highly rated." Then, in his *The Rights of Man*, a wider vision: "My country is the world and my religion is to do good."

In Europe, Jacques Delille reminds us: "Fate chooses our relatives, we choose our friends."

Chamfort ventures: "The most wasted day of all is that on which we have not laughed."

And one Johann Lavater muses, "Say not you know another entirely, till you have divided an inheritance with him."

Georg Lichtenberg points out the perverse modus operandi of that most annoying of adversaries, the contrarian: "To do just the opposite is also a form of imitation."

Let's come back to America now and the framer of our Declaration, Thomas Jefferson. It is ever an inspiration and a guide to hear once again: "When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable – frequently quoted as "inalienable" – rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness." Knowing they might well all hang, he includes: "And for the support of this declaration with a firm reliance on the protection of divine providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor." In calmer days, he would write in various letters: "The basis of our government being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter." And, "The republican is the only form of government which is not eternally at open or secret war with the rights of mankind." "Delay is preferable to error." "I have sworn upon the altar of God, eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man." "I agree with you that there is a natural aristocracy among men. The grounds of this are virtue and talents." The simple admission, which is an image of my own inclination: "I cannot live without books." Then "Enlighten the people generally, and tyranny and oppressions of body and mind will vanish like evil spirits at the dawn of day." "I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion." Here's a wry comment on the United States Congress: "That one hundred and fifty lawyers should do business together ought not to be expected." And, finally, his last words, the question: "This is the Fourth?"

Let us pause now, to rehear a bit of our Constitution, certainly America's and one of history's most momentous documents. From the Preamble: "We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." In the Amendments: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise

thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.” “The right of the people to be secure... against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause.” “Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishment inflicted.” “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged... on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged ... on account of sex.”

That last Amendment brings us handily to Abigail Adams, born 1744, died 1818. In a letter to her husband John, she writes: “In the new code of laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make I desire you would remember the ladies, and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the husbands. Remember all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice, or representation.”

Now, let’s pop over to Europe, for Lamarck, and his First Law: “In every animal... a more frequent and continuous use of any organ gradually strengthens, develops and enlarges that organ... while the *permanent* disuse of any organ imperceptibly weakens and deteriorates it, and progressively diminishes its functional capacity, until it finally disappears.”

Here’s William Scott, with a comment on commerce that has let to many a writeoff: “A dinner lubricates business.”

Now, a siren from America at sea, from John Paul Jones: “I wish to have no connection with any ship that does not sail *fast*; for I intend to go *in harm’s way*.”

To Europe again, this time for the great Goethe, who tells us: “A useless life is an early death.” And, “Life teaches us to be less harsh with ourselves and with others.”

Returning to America, here is James Madison, in *The Federalist*: “A zeal for different opinions concerning religion, concerning government, and many other points, as well of speculation as of practice; an attachment of different leaders ambitiously contending for preeminence and power; or to person of other descriptions whose fortunes have been interesting to the human passions, have, in turn, divided mankind into parties, inflamed them with mutual animosity, and rendered them much more disposed to vex and oppress each other than to cooperate for their common good.... But the most common and durable source of factions has been the various and unequal distribution of property.” And, in a speech to the Virginia Convention: “I believe there are more instances of the

abridgment of the freedom of the people by gradual and silent encroachments of those in power than by violent and sudden usurpations.”

Now, over to the English dramatist Sheridan: “The number of those who undergo the fatigue of judging for themselves is very small indeed.”

And Johann Voss tells us in a jolly rhyme:

Who does not love wine, women, and song
Remains a fool his whole life long.

Talleyrand dares this: “Women sometimes forgive a man who forces the opportunity; but never a man who misses one.”

Meanwhile, in America Nathan Hale was saying: “I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country.” And Alexander Hamilton had already, in a debate of the Federal Convention, in 1787, a kind word for Britain: “I believe the British government forms the best model the world ever produced.... This government has for its object public strength and individual security.” And in *The Federalist*: “Let Americans disdain to be the instruments of European greatness. Let the thirteen States, bound together in a strict and indissoluble Union, concur in erecting one great American system, superior to the control of all transatlantic force and influence, and able to dictate the terms of the connection between the old and the new world!”

The great justice John Marshall gave us, in an opinion penned in 1819: “Let the end be legitimate, let it be within the scope of the constitution, and all means which are appropriate, which are plainly adapted to that end, which are not prohibited, but consistent with the letter and spirit of the constitution, are constitutional.” In the same: “The power to tax involves the power to destroy.” And, lest we be slavish in regard for it ever unchangeable, “The people made the Constitution, and the people can unmake it. It is the creature of their own will, and lives only by their will.”

Here is what, in a eulogy, Henry Lee presented to the House of Representatives on the death of Washington: “To the memory of the Man, first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen.”

And now to the English poet Blake, from whom we shall take simply: “For every thing that lives is Holy.”

Thence to Robert Burns for this from *Green Grow the Rashes, O*:

Auld Nature swears, the lovely dears
Her noblest work she classes, O:
Her prentice han’ she tried on man,

An then she made the lasses, O.
 And this from his *Posthumous Pieces*, an epitaph for another:
 If there's another world, he lives in bliss;
 If there is none, he made the best of this.

A second William Pitt cautions us: "Necessity is the plea for every infringement of human freedom. It is the argument of tyrants; it is the creed of slaves."

And now to the poet Schiller, Beethoven's inspiration for the coral epiphany of his Ninth Symphony, for stanza one of the *Ode to Joy*:

Joy, thou spark from Heav'n immortal,
 Daughter of Elysium!
 Drunk with fire, toward Heaven advancing
 Goddess, to thy shrine we come.
 They sweet magic brings together
 What stern Custom spreads afar;
 All men become brothers
 Where thy happy wing-beats are.

He also offers this more earthy advice: "The joke loses everything when the joker laughs himself." Follows it with, "I am better than my reputation." And:

On the mountains there is freedom!
 The world is perfect everywhere,
 Save where man comes with his torment.

Now to one Samuel Rogers for this wry comment: "It doesn't much signify whom one marries, for one is sure to find next morning that it was someone else."

Then over to John Quincy Adams for this piece of sage advice, in 1821: "America... well knows that by once enlisting under other banners than her own, were they even the banners of foreign independence, she would involve herself beyond the power of extraction, in all the wars of interest and intrigue, of individual avarice, envy, and ambition, which assume the colors and usurp the standard of freedom. The fundamental maxims of her policy would insensibly change from liberty to force.... She might become dictatress of the world. She would be no longer the ruler of her own spirit."

Here's William Wordsworth, from whom we shall take:

Have I not reason to lament
 What man has made of man?

And this on natural piety:

I have learned
 To look on nature, not as in the hour
 Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes

The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

Here now is Walter Scott, with a snippet for bedtime:

To all, to each, a fair goodnight,
And pleasing dreams, and slumbers light!

And that will mark, if I may, the conclusion of Act I. Hope to see you back for more.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

It is 1905, and John Bartlett is now in his mid-sixties. He has long ago quit the bookstore and taken a job at the publishing company of Little Brown, where he has become executive editor. We meet him in his office, where he has an advance copy of the 9th Edition of his now famous *Familiar Quotations*. Rather than being the young firebrand, enkindled by the inaugural edition, he is now the older connoisseur, proud, in fact, astonished, at how well his book has done.

BARTLETT

Good evening. A great many things have happened since the first edition of Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations* made its way into to world, way back in 1855. For one, I've managed to age a bit. Also, finally quit the bookstore at Harvard and took a job as an editor at the publishing company of Little Brown in Boston. Managed to move up, as you can tell by my now-spacious office, in fact, somehow became a senior partner. A lot has happened to my book of quotations, too. It has, in fact, met with a degree of success that flatters my fondest hopes. It has actually gone through eight editions – each one, as might be expected, a bit heftier than the one before.

(picks up new book)

And what I have here, to share with you, is nothing less than an advance copy of the Ninth Edition, out in this good year of 1905. I've been able to add some wonderful selections. Before I get going, let me do the proper thing and acknowledge that my dear wife has been a devoted helper in getting it together, as she has been with every edition. Now, if I start at the beginning to point out new quotations, we'll never get done. So let me pick up where I left off when we first met. That way we can delectate our way through entirely new material and, hopefully, bring ourselves right up to the present. Now, let's see.

(opens book)

I left off with Scott. Who shall be our first honoree? How about we begin with a quote from Stendhal, who, judging for these words, went in for love without much in the way of reservations. He tells us, "Love has always been the most important business in my life, I should say the only one." Good for him. I've done my utmost in that area, but, like most of us, I've also had to devote a bit of time to other things.

Next, I'd like to turn to Lord Byron and this wistful, well-know goodbye:

So we'll go no more a-roving
 So late into the night,
 Though the heart be still as loving,
 And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears its sheath,
 And the soul wears out the breast,
 And the heart must pause to breathe,
 And love itself have rest.

Though the night was made for loving,
 And the day returns too soon,
 Yet we'll go no more a-roving
 By the light of the moon.

Let me also take this from his extended poem *Don Juan*:

Not so Leonidas and Washington,
 Whose every battlefield is holy ground,
 Which breathes of nations saved, not worlds undone.

That from an Englishman, born 1788. Seems the rift between the Colonies and Great Britain was already on the mend, at least, among its citizenry.

Now, let me share this humorously cynical comment by Lamartine: "The more I see of the representatives of the people, the more I admire my dogs."

Here now is something quite inspirational from Shelly's *Prometheus Unbound*:

To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
 To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
 To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;
 To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates
 From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
 Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
 This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
 Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;
 This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory.

Let me also take this famous tribute to the redemptive power of memory:

Music, when soft voices die,
 Vibrates in the memory;
 Odors, when sweet violets sicken,
 Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
 Are heaped for the beloved's bed;
 And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
 Love itself shall slumber on.

Let's allow Thomas Carlyle to step in among the English poets for these prose tidbits of self-evident wisdom: "The courage we desire and prize is not the courage to die decently, but to live manfully." And "The great law of culture is: Let each become all that he was created capable of being."

And from there let us return to poetry, Keats, and what else?:
 When old age shall this generation waste,
 Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
 Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
 "Beauty is truth, truth beauty," – that is all
 Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

I've also taken this from a letter he penned to a friend: "I was never afraid of failure; for I would sooner fail than not be among the greatest." Brief as his stay in life was, he is surely enshrined there.

David Hartley Coleridge gives us this virtuous couplet:

But what is Freedom? Rightly understood,
 A universal license to be good.

And Horace Mann laments, "Lost, yesterday, somewhere between sunrise and sunset, two golden hours, each set with sixty diamond minutes. No reward is offered, for they are gone forever."

Here from Germany we have Heinrich Heine, telling us, "Wherever they burn books they will also, in the end, burn human beings." And, in his last words: "Of course he [God] will forgive me; that's his business.

It is interesting to note that, way back in 1850, quite some time before Nietzsche exploded on the philosophical scene, we have Sojourner Truth, who was actually a woman by the name of Isabella Van Wagener, asking of Frederick Douglass: "Frederick, is God dead?" She also says, in a speech at a Woman's Rights Convention, "That... man... says women can't have as much rights as man, cause Christ wasn't a woman. Where did your Christ come from?... From God and a woman. Man had nothing to do with him." Perhaps, after all, it is only our cantankerously various definitions of God that

we may question. After all, something started all we behold, and it seems to me that whatever that is can serve as a rather unimpeachable definition.

Now, we hear from the painter, Delacroix, who tells us: "Painting is only a bridge linking the painter's mind with that of the viewer."

And then to one Bronson Alcott, with whom I quite agree: "One must be a wise reader to quote wisely and well."

Now, straight into the political fray, with Simon Cameron, who has attributed to him this comment on the corrupt variety: "An honest politician is one who when he's bought stays bought."

Thence to Lord Macaulay, the first author we shall quote who was born in the 19th Century, for this high observation: "That is the best government which desires to make the people happy, and knows how to make them happy." And "Free trade, one of the greatest blessings which a government can confer on a people, is in almost every country unpopular."

Let us dwell a while now on that prolific and pragmatic American essayist and independent spirit, Ralph Waldo Emerson: "To different minds, the same world is a hell, and a heaven." "Undoubtedly we have no questions to ask which are unanswerable. We must trust the perfection of the creation so far, as to believe that whatever curiosity the order of things has awakened in our minds, the order of things can satisfy." "Character is higher than intellect." "Money, which represents the prose of life, and which is hardly spoken of in parlors without an apology, is, in its effects and laws, as beautiful as roses." "I wish that life should not be cheap, but sacred. I wish the days to be centuries, loaded, fragrant." "Can anybody remember when the times were not hard and money not scarce?" And lastly, "Life is not so short but that there is always time enough for courtesy." Wise words, one and all.

Now, here we have an optimistic fellow named Richard Horne, who enthuses: "'Tis always morning somewhere in the world."

Benjamin Disraeli speaks forth with, "How much easier it is to be critical than to be correct." And, quoting another, says, "'My idea of an agreeable person," said Hugo Bohun, 'is a person who agrees with me.'"

George Sand, otherwise known as Amandine Aurore Lucile Dupin, sends us wandering back to Stendhal with: "There is only one happiness in life, to love and be loved."

From Tocqueville, we simply take, on this occasion, something to please the ladies: “If I were asked... to what the singular prosperity and growing strength of that people [the Americans] ought mainly to be attributed, I should reply: To the superiority of their women.”

Elizabeth Barrett Browning included this shame-on-us thought in her *Sonnets from the Portuguese*: “Because God’s gifts put man’s best dreams to shame.”

And now to an Englishman who was born in the same year Elizabeth Barrett was, 1806, the philosopher John Stuart Mill: “The sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number is self-protection.” And: “If all mankind minus one were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind.” “There is no such thing as absolute certainty, but there is assurance sufficient for the purposes of human life.” “The liberty of the individual must be thus far limited; he must not make himself a nuisance to other people.” And finally: “The worth of a state, in the long run, is the worth of the individuals composing it.”

From Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, let me quote the first two stanzas of his *A Psalm to Life*:

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

And now, born 1809, we have Charles Darwin, with, “I have called this principle, by which each slight variation, if useful, is preserved, by the term Natural Selection.” And I love this understatement: “We will now discuss in a little more detail the Struggle for Existence.” He comments in a letter: “As for a future life, every man must judge for himself between conflicting vague probabilities.” “Conflicting vague probabilities?” Seems to me the concept also has some application to the present life.

Here Oliver Wendell Holmes lets us in on the inestimably subtle truth half the world operates by: “Man has his will – but woman has her way!” We’ll leave him with, “Science is a first-rate piece of furniture for a man’s upper chamber, if he has common sense on the ground floor.”

Now we come to the second great soul to inhabit the White House and save the nation, Abraham Lincoln, born 1809, died 1865. “No man is good enough to govern another man without that other’s consent.” In a speech at Peoria, 1854: “I hate [slavery] because it deprives the republican example of its just influence in the world – enables the enemies of free institutions, with plausibility, to taunt us as hypocrites – causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity.” In a message to Congress, 1861: “This is essentially a people’s contest.... It is a struggle for maintaining in the world that form and substance of government whose leading object is to elevate the condition of men – to lift artificial weights from all shoulders – to clear the paths of laudable pursuit for all – to afford all an unfettered start, and a fair chance, in the race of life.” And in his second annual message to Congress, 1862: “Fellow citizens, we cannot escape history. We of this Congress and this administration will be remembered in spite of ourselves. No personal significance or insignificance can spare one or another of us. The fiery trial through which we pass will light us down in honor or dishonor to the last generation. We say we are for the Union. The world will not forget that we say this. We know how to save the Union. The world knows we do know how to save it. We, even we here, hold the power and bear the responsibility. In giving freedom to the slave, we assure freedom to the free – honorable alike in what we give and what we preserve. We shall nobly save or meanly lose the last, best hope of earth. Other means may succeed; this could not fail. The way is plain, peaceful, generous, just – a way which if followed the world will forever applaud and God must forever bless.” We shall allow his other brave words to reverberate in your memory, as they have, we know, since childhood.

Poe, in not at all a haunting mood, delights us forever with the music of:

Helen, thy beauty is to me
 Like those Nicean barks of yore,
 That gently, o’er a perfumed sea,
 The weary, wayworn wanderer bore
 To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
 Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
 Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
 To the glory that was Greece,
 And the grandeur that was Rome.

(archly)

“Quoth the Raven...”

From Lord Tennyson we take simply the lovely:
 Sunset and evening star,

And one clear call for me!
 And may there be no moaning of the bar,
 When I put out to sea.

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
 Too full for sound and foam,
 When that which drew from out the boundless deep
 Turns again home.

From Robert Browning we hear, “Less is more.” And this encouragement: “A minute’s success pays the failure of years.”

And from Dickens, “I am the Ghost of Christmas Past.” “Long past?” inquired Scrooge.... “No. Your past.” And from *Hard Times*: “Now, what I want is Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else.”

Returning to the Constitution, David Davis writes: “The Constitution of the United States is a law for rulers and people, equally in war and in peace, and covers with the shield of its protection all classes of men, at all times, and under all circumstances. No doctrine, involving more pernicious consequences, was ever invented by the wit of man than that any of its provisions can be suspended during any of the great exigencies of government.”

Here Elizabeth Cady Stanton reinterprets the Declaration of Independence for the other half of humanity: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men and women are created equal.”

Thence to Thoreau, for what may be the most telling thing he ever uttered about his own approach to life: “It is a great art to saunter.” Also, from him: “The perception of beauty is a moral test.” And: “As for doing good, this is one of the professions that is full.” “Men will lie on their backs, talking about the fall of man, and never make an effort to get up.” And a few days before his death: “One world at a time.”

Now here’s Josh Billings, America’s foremost mangler of words, to the delight of his forbearing readers: “A secret ceases tew be a secret if it iz once confided – it iz like a dollar bill, once broken, it iz never a dollar agin.” “As scare as truth is, the supply has always been in excess of the demand.” And: “It is better to know nothing than to know what ain’t so.”

One Eliza Cook advises us:

Better build schoolrooms for “the boy”
 Than cells and gibbets for “the man.”

And Frederick Douglass argues, “No man can put a chain about the ankle of his fellow man without at last finding the other end fastened about his own neck.”

Maybe the most interesting thing Karl Marx ever said is, “All I know is that I am not a Marxist.” You see, as a longtime bookstore owner, I always thought that, while a workingman or woman obviously has value, the fellow who creates a business and provides jobs has a good deal of value, too. To right the matter according to my own lights a little more, I think one of the most underappreciated aspects of enterprise is that, in its search for cheap labor, it naturally go looking for and throws out a lifeline to the poorest people, wherever it finds them; whereas when the state’s in charge, the wealth seems to go with pretty unexceptional inclination to the state. Well, enough of tootin’ my own horn and back to the horns you came to hear tooted.

George Eliot, aka Marian Evans Cross, gave us, men and women alike, this bon mot: “I’m not denyin’ the women are foolish; God Almighty made ‘em to match the men.”

Here’s a thought an inveterate quote aficionado like me agrees with wholeheartedly. It’s from James Russell Lowell:

Though old the thought and oft expressed,
‘Tis his at last who says it best.

See Pope for a couplet of remarkable similarity.

John Ruskin, the art critic who was also quite a prose stylist, tells us, “He is the greatest artist who has embodied, in the sum of his works, the greatest number of the greatest ideas.” That critique is intended to bear no relation whatsoever to the current work. He also writes, “There is no wealth but life.” “Great nations write their autobiographies in three manuscripts – the book of their deeds, the book of their words, and the book of their art.”

Now to that Niagara of American expression, free as the new country itself, Walt Whitman:

A child said *What is the grass?* Fetching it to me
with full hands;
How could I answer the child? I do not know what
it is any more than he.

And:

To touch my person to someone else’s is about as
much as I can stand.

I think I could turn and live with animals, they are
 so placid and self-contain'd,
 I stand and look at them long and long.

They do not sweat and whine about their condition,
 They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God,
 Not one is dissatisfied, not one is demented with
 the mania of owning things,
 Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that
 lived thousands of years ago,
 Not one is respectable or unhappy over the whole earth.

Do I contradict myself?
 Very well then I contradict myself,
 (I am large, I contain multitudes.)

If anything is sacred the human body is sacred.

To me every hour of the light and dark is a miracle,
 Every cubic inch of space is a miracle.

Here now is Susan B. Anthony, in 1869: “Join the union, girls, and together say *Equal Pay for Equal Work*.” Also from her: “Marriage, to women as to men, must be a luxury, not a necessity; an incident of life, not all of it. And the only possible way to accomplish this great change is to accord to women equal power in the making, shaping and controlling of the circumstances of life.”

From her to General William Tecumseh Sherman, who gives us his thought on the purpose of war: “The legitimate object of war is a more perfect peace.”

From Herbert Spencer, we have the wise educator’s elusive ideal: “Education has for its object the formation of character.”

John Tyndall gives us his version of the agreement between thought and reality: “The brightest flashes in the world of thought are incomplete until they have been proved to have their counterparts in the world of fact.”

Next to Flaubert and his *Madame Bovary* for: “Anyone’s death always releases something like an aura of stupefaction, so difficult is it to grasp this irruption of nothingness and to believe that it has actually taken place.”

Thence skipping across the Channel, we have the English poet, Matthew Arnold, first in an unaccustomed sunny mood:

Is it so small a thing
To have enjoyed the sun,
To have lived light in the spring,
To have loved, to have thought, to have done;
To have advanced true friends, and beat down
baffling foes?

As well as: “Sanity – that is the great virtue of the ancient literature; the want of that is the great defect of the modern, in spite of its variety and power.” And: “I am bound by my own definition of criticism: *a disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world.*” Now, from his haunting poem *Dover Beach*:

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept by confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

Finally, “The whole scope of the essay is to recommend culture as the great help out of our present difficulties; culture being a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all the matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world.” Why, by that definition, this must indeed be an extremely cultured evening.

Now, from the general who became a President, Ulysses S. Grant. First, as the general, his troops arrayed before a confederate fort: “No terms except an unconditional and immediate surrender can be accepted. I propose to move immediately upon your works.” Then as the man who would be President, upon stopping his men from cheering after Lee’s surrender at Appomattox Court House: “The war is over – the rebels are our countrymen again.”

Meanwhile, in Russia Tolstoi begins his novel *Anna Karenina* with the charming observation: “Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.” In the mode of essayist, he gives us: “Art is a human activity having for its purpose the transmission to others of the highest and best feeling to which men have risen.” We continue to come across this sentiment, yet, I must admit, it is troubling to me

how infrequently I see new works of art with such a high goal or even a willingness on the part of many current artists to make use of the means that might achieve it.

Here is Geronimo, in his own words, to President Grant: “It [Arizona] is my land, my home, my father’s land, to which I now ask to be allowed to return. I want to spend my last days there, and be buried among those mountains. If this could be I might die in peace, feeling that my people, placed in their native homes, would increase in numbers, rather than diminish as at present, and that our name would not become extinct.”

And now Charles Dudley Warner on the joys of property ownership, without the expense of maintenance: “No man but feels more of a man in the world if he have a bit of ground that he can call his own. However small it is on the surface, it is four thousand miles deep; and that is a very handsome property.” And this sardonic bite from him: “The thing generally raised on city land is taxes.”

Here’s Emily Dickenson, with her usual profusion of original expression and dash marks:

Inebriate of Air – am I –
And Debauchee of Dew –
Reeling – through endless summer days –
From inns of Molten Blue –

Also the autobiographical:

This is my letter to the World
That never wrote to Me –
The simple News that Nature told –
With tender Majesty.

And:

That it will never come again
Is what makes life so sweet.

(apart from the book)

I should also locate her thought, “Success is counted sweetest by those who never succeed.” I must make a note not to forget, in the bustle of the centuries.

This from Robert Ingersoll, in an address at a child’s grave: “We, too, have our religion, and it is this: Help for the living, hope for the dead.” He was one of the most forthright of skeptics, as well as a great humanist, who also wrote:

Justice is the only worship.
Love is the only priest.
Ignorance is the only slavery.
Happiness is the only good.

The time to be happy is now,
 The place to be happy is here,
 The way to be happy is to make others so.

Having now lived quite some time, I am not certain that making others happy is as easy as I once supposed.

On a similar bent, we have George Arnold: “Life for the living, and rest for the dead!”

We’re about mid-19th Century now, and a man who preferred to be known as Artemus Ward, writes: “The Puritans nobly fled from a land of despotism to a land of freedom, where they could not only enjoy their own religion, but could prevent everybody else from enjoyin *his*.” And, “Let us all be happy and live within our means, even if we have to borrow the money to do it with.”

Samuel Butler, who gave us *The Way of All Flesh*, also kept notebooks, from which I’ll take the wry observation: “Life is the art of drawing sufficient conclusions from insufficient premises.”

The great philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie, here gives us a glimpse into his ethics: “Surplus wealth is a sacred truth which its possessor is bound to administer in his lifetime for the good of the community.” And, “The man who dies...rich dies disgraced.” To such a guiding vision we owe as much as any philanthropist ever gave us.

Now we arrive at the sage humorist Sam Clemens, or, as he would have it, Mark Twain, of whom William Dean Howells said, “Clemens was sole, incomparable, the Lincoln of our literature.” Then let us pause with him a bit: From *Pudd’nhead Wilson* we select a contrarian financial tactic: “Put all your eggs in the one basket and – WATCH THAT BASKET.” As well as these dollops of Pudd’nhead’s thoughts: “Few things are harder to put up with than the annoyance of a good example.” “It were not best that we should all think alike; it is difference of opinion that makes horse races.” And, “When in doubt tell the truth.” As opposed to, “Truth is the most valuable thing we have. Let us economize it.” Finally from that book, “It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have those three unspeakably precious things: freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence never to practice either of them.” From his *Autobiographical Dictation*, we have, “I believe that our Heavenly Father invented man because he was disappointed in the monkey.” In the most radical of his twists, *Letters from the Earth*, which documents the devil’s supposed visit here, we take: “[Man] has imagined a heaven, and has left entirely out of it the supremest of all his delights... sexual intercourse!... His heaven is like himself: strange, interesting, astonishing, grotesque. I give you my word, it has not a single feature in it that he *actually values*.” Courage now, one more thought from there: “[The Bible] has noble poetry in it; and some clever fables; and some blood-drenched

history; and a wealth of obscenity; and upwards of a thousand lies.” To lighten things up, let’s conclude with two attributions: “Clothes make the man. Naked people have little or no influence in society.” And, “Golf is a good walk spoiled.”

Next, the great English wit and lyricist, W. S. Gilbert, from whom we’ll take something very familiar and something less so. First, this bit of levity from *H. M. S. Pinafore* about how to rise in the British admiralty:

When I was a lad I served a term
As office boy to an Attorney’s firm.
I cleaned the windows and I swept the floor
And I polished up the handle on the big front door.
I polished up that handle so carefuller
That now I am the Ruler of the Queen’s Navee!

From *The Mikado*:

Then the idiot who praises, with enthusiastic tone,
All centuries but this, and every country but his own.

And finally from *The Gondoliers*:

Life’s a pudding full of plums;
Care’s a canker that benumbs,
Wherefore waste our elocution
On impossible solution?
Life’s a pleasant institution,
Let’s take it as it comes!

Now, to William Dean Howells for this attribution: “Some people can stay longer in an hour than others can in a week.”

From Henry Brooks Adams, we’ll select: “Accident counts for much in companionship as in marriage.” And, “The effect of power and publicity on all men is the aggravation of self, a sort of tumor that ends by killing the victim’s sympathies.” Last, for all the teachers out there, “A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.”

From William Lecky, we have, in his *History of European Morals*, a scathing appraisal of faith gone wrong: “The Augustinian doctrine of the damnation of unbaptized infants and the Calvinistic doctrine of reprobation... surpass in atrocity any tenets that have ever been admitted into any pagan creed.” Apparently, he was not familiar with the blood sacrifices of such as the Aztecs. Also, from him: “It had been boldly predicted by some of the early Christians that the conversion of the world would lead to the establishment of perpetual peace. In looking back, with our present experience, we are driven to the

melancholy conclusion that, instead of diminishing the number of wars, ecclesiastical influence has actually and very seriously increased it.”

One John, Vicount Morley of Blackburn, on the other hand, takes a dim view of paganism: “Where it is a duty to worship the sun it is pretty sure to be a crime to examine the laws of heat.” And, “Success depends on three things: who says it, what he says, how he says it; and of these three things, what he says is the least important.”

From the great naturalist John Muir, we get something about our common lot, as fellow voyagers through life: “How hard to realize that every camp of men or beast has this glorious starry firmament for a roof! In such places standing alone on the mountaintop it is easy to realize that whatever special nests we make – leaves and moss like the marmots and birds, or tents or piled stone – we all dwell in a house of one room – the world with the firmament for its roof – and are sailing the celestial spaces without leaving any track.”

From the American pragmatist Charles Sanders Peirce, I take the simple admonition: “Do not block the way of inquiry.” And the insight: “Every man is fully satisfied that there is such a thing as truth, or he would not ask any question.”

Austin Dobson lets us know what really flies:

Time goes, you say? Ah no!
Alas, Time stays, *we* go.

And here we have the tangible heaviness of heart of Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce’ tribe: “Our chiefs are killed.... The old men are all dead.... The little children are freezing to death. My people, some of them have run away to the hills and have no blankets, no food. No one knows where they are, perhaps freezing to death. I want to have time to look for my children and see how many of them I can find. Maybe I can find them among the dead. Hear me, my chiefs. My heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever.”

John Wilson reminds me of my own book-bent sentiments: “Oh for a book and a shady nook, either in door or out.”

Elizabeth Wordsworth muses on idealism with:

If all the good people were clever,
And all clever people were good,
The world would be nicer than ever
We thought that it possibly could.

Emile Zola takes a practical turn: “I am little concerned with beauty or perfection. I don’t care for the great centuries. All I care about is life, struggle, intensity. I am at ease

in my generation.” And as good a description of art as any: “A work of art is a corner of creation seen through a temperament.”

From Justice Oliver Holmes, Jr., we take this brief miscellany: “Life is an end in itself, and the only question as to whether it is worth living is whether you have enough of it.” “Taxes are what we pay for civilized society.” “When men have realized that time has upset many fighting faiths, they may come to believe even more than they believe the very foundations of their own conduct that the ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideas – that the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market, and that truth is the only ground upon which their wishes safely can be carried out. That at any rate is the theory of our Constitution. It is an experiment, as all life is an experiment.” Finally, “The power to tax is not the power to destroy while this Court sits.”

The various William James gives us, “We are spinning our own fates, good or evil, and never to be undone. Every smallest stroke of virtue or of vice leaves its never so little scar... Nothing we ever do is, in strict scientific literalness, wiped out.” Well, we are, it seems to me at least in this way, eternal, aren’t we? Just think! If I simply lift my arm thus and lower it, that event has happened and can never be undone; it has become, forever, part of the great unfolding of life in the vastness. Back to William, his brother next: “This life is worth living, we can say, since it is what we make it, from the moral point of view.” Last, this encouragement: “Be not afraid of life. Believe that life *is* worth living, and your belief will help create the fact.”

And here’s his literary brother, Henry, who says a couple of things along the same lines. This first is from his novel *The Ambassadors*: “Live all you can; it’s a mistake not to. It doesn’t so much matter what you do in particular, so long as you have your life. If you haven’t had that what *have* you had?... What one loses one loses; make no mistake about that.... The right time is *any* time that one is still so lucky as to have Live!” Then this from a letter: “We must know, as much as possible, in our beautiful art... what we are talking about – and the only way to know is to have lived and loved and cursed and floundered and enjoyed and suffered. I think I don’t regret a single “excess” of my responsive youth – I only regret, in my chilled age, certain occasions and possibilities I didn’t embrace.” Well, I say embrace away, so long as we do so with consideration for others, in fact, with consideration, one hopes, for all living things.

Now arrives Fredrich Nietzsche, from whom we might take the evidentially suspect assertion that “God is dead!” To which a wit replied, “Nietzsche is dead!” and signed it “God.” Let us take instead two very sane cautions: “Distrust all in whom the impulse to punish is powerful.” And “Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster. And when you look long into an abyss, the abyss also looks into you.”

At a lower temperature, now, we hear the logic of William Clifford, in 1872: “Remember, then, that it [science] is the guide of action; that the truth which it arrives at is not that which we can ideally contemplate without error, but that which we may act upon without fear; and you cannot fail to see that scientific thought is not an accompaniment or condition of human progress, but human progress itself.” Ah, yes, the inestimable glories and benefactions of scientific progress. Yet the mind, inveterate wanderer, cannot help but wonder, not only about the what and how of existence, but the why? And that may not ever be within the realm of science or, in fact, any kind of human knowledge, for we are all the creatures of finitude and can only suspect that what we must know is available in that rather wondrous realm.

Next, to Charles Scott, who reports that “The primary office of a newspaper is the gathering of news... comment is free, but facts are sacred.”

From Henry Lloyd, we have, “Monopoly is Business at the end of its journey.”

From which we rise, if I may adapt Wordsworth’s phrase, to the “resolution and independence” of William Ernest Henley in his resounding poem *Invictus*:

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance,
I have not winced nor cried aloud;
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is blood, but unbowed.

Thence to the defiant conclusion:

I am the master of my fate;
I am the captain of my soul.

And who doesn’t know this engraved invitation to liberty by Emma Lazarus:

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me:
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

Sir William Osler reminds us of why reason has often found itself helpless before authority, with this accusatory comment: “The greater the ignorance the greater the dogmatism.”

From Henry Cabot Lodge, we have an invitation to become, purely and simply, Americans: “Let us have done with British-Americans and Irish-Americans and German-Americans, and so on, all be Americans.... If a man is going to be an American at all let him be so without any qualifying adjectives; and if he is going to be something else, let him drop the word American from his personal description.” Also from him, “It is the flag just as much of the man who was naturalized yesterday as of the man whose people have been here many generations.”

And now to Robert Louis Stevenson, who, in addition to giving us tales of the sea, was quite a philosopher. To wit: “The cruelest lies are often told in silence.” “It is better to be a fool than to be dead.” “Perpetual devotion to what a man calls his business, is only to be sustained by perpetual neglect of many other things.” “There is no duty we so much underrate as the duty of being happy.” “If your morals make you dreary, depend upon it, they are wrong. I do not say give them up, for they may be all you have, but conceal them like a vice lest they should spoil the lives of better and simpler people.” Finally, “Here lies one who meant well, tried a little, failed much: – surely that may be his epitaph of which he need not be ashamed.”

From Ella Wilcox, we have this gentle reassurance:

So many gods, so many creeds,
So many paths that wind and wind,
When just the art of being kind
Is all this sad world needs.

George Moore takes time, in 1900, to state what we all know too well and forget too often: “After all there is but one race – humanity.”

Edgar Watson Howe informs us, “What people say behind your back is your standing in the community.”

And Willard Vandiver lets us know where he’s from, in, “I come from a state that raises corn and cotton and cockleburs and Democrats, and frothy eloquence neither convinces nor satisfies me. I am from Missouri. You have got to show me.”

Now, to Oscar Wilde, the inspired wit who, all the world knows, told customs he had nothing to declare but his genius. We’ll select a few irresistible aphorisms: “A poet can survive everything but a misprint.” Keats excepted, I assume. “There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written, or badly written. That is all.” “The

only way to get rid of temptation is to yield to it.” Of course, we have, “What is a cynic? A man who knows the price of everything, and the value of nothing.” Finally, “The youth of America is their oldest tradition. It has been going on now for three hundred years.”

For further analysis of the human condition, we now turn to Freud, whose writings we will sample thus: “The interpretations of dreams is the royal road to a knowledge of the unconscious activities of the mind.” “At bottom God is nothing more than an exalted father.” “If a man has been his mother’s undisputed darling he retains throughout life the triumphant feeling, the confidence in success, which not seldom brings actual success with it.” And for the writers in our audience: “Before the problem of the creative writer, analysis must lay down its arms.” “Judaism had been a religion of the father; Christianity became a religion of the son. The old God the Father fell back behind Christ; Christ, the Son, took his place, just as every son had hoped to do in primeval times.” “The great question... which I have not been able to answer, despite my thirty years of research into the feminine soul, is “What does a woman want?” Had he listened a bit more carefully he might have found the answer in his own soul, that is, not that much different that what a man wants. And last, the simple phrase, “To love and to work.” Sort of a variation on Voltaire’s injunction in *Candide* to tend your garden.

Now, for a bountiful supply of thunder from George Bernard Shaw: “People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don’t believe in circumstances. The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can’t find them, make them.” “We have no more right to consume happiness without producing it than to consume wealth without producing it.” “There is only one religion, though there are a hundred versions of it.” “The worst sin towards our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them: that’s the essence of inhumanity.” “This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; the being thoroughly worn out before you are thrown on the scrap heap; the being a force of nature instead of a feverish selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy.” “The golden rule is that there are no golden rules.” “Marriage is popular because it combines the maximum of temptation with the maximum of opportunity.” “I am a millionaire. That is my religion.” “When two people are under the influence of the most violent, most insane, most delusive, and most transient of passions, they are required to swear that they will remain in that excited, abnormal, and exhausting condition continuously until death do them part.” And, lastly, the famous: “You see things; and you say, ‘Why?’ But I dream things that never were; and I say, ‘Why not?’” Time to move on.

Booker T Washington gives us, as attributed, the reminder, “You can’t hold a man down without staying down with him.”

Teddy Roosevelt lets us know that: “A man who is good enough to shed his blood for his country is good enough to be given a square deal afterwards. More than that no man is entitled to, and less than that no man shall have.” And he advises the press, “The men with the muckrakes are often indispensable to the well-being of society, but only if they know when to stop raking the muck, and to look upward to the celestial crown above them.... If they gradually grow to feel that the whole world is nothing but muck their power of usefulness is gone.”

At entirely the opposite end of the spectrum from the contemplation of the usefulness of muck, Katherin Lee Bates gave us, in 1893, *American the Beautiful*:

O beautiful for spacious skies,
 For amber waves of grain,
 For purple mountain majesties
 Above the fruited plain!
 America! America!
 God shed his grace on thee
 And crown thy good with brotherhood
 From sea to shining sea!

Sir James M. Barrie wrote, “Them that has china plates themselves is the most careful not to break the china plates of others.” And, “Shall we make a new rule of life from tonight: always to try to be a little kinder than is necessary.”

From William Jennings Bryan, we get encouragement for the man who finds himself convinced of something, despite all the naysayers: “The humblest citizen of all the land, when clad in the armor of a righteous cause, is stronger than all the hosts of Error.”

Here we have literature’s most famous writer/physician, Anton Chekhov, confiding in a letter: “My holy of holies is the human body, health, intelligence, talent, inspiration, love and the most absolute freedom imaginable, freedom from violence and lies, no matter what form the latter two take. Such is the program I would adhere to if I were a major artist.” He need not worry; he is. Let me quote this, from his play *Uncle Vanya*: “People should be beautiful in every way – in their faces, in the way they dress, in their thoughts and in their innermost selves.”

I’m not getting quite close to today and my final selections for the Ninth Edition. This quote is from the philosopher, George Santayana: “Happiness is the only sanction of life; where happiness fails, existence remains a mad and lamentable experiment.” Well, we should, I think, leave room for happiness faltering while hope obtains. All right, I’ll get out of the way. Next, from him, “That life is worth living is the most necessary of assumptions, and, were it not assumed, the most impossible of conclusions.” Along the

same lines, “There is no cure for birth and death save to enjoy the interval.” And last, “My atheism, like that of Spinoza, is true piety towards the universe and denies only gods fashioned by men in their own image, to be servants of their human interests.” It seems that faith and doubt revolve ever around how we define faith, in particular how we choose to define what we are disposed to call God.

Back down to earth, we hear Logan Pearsall Smith state the practical admonition, “There are few sorrows, however poignant, in which a good income is of no avail.”

Now, to Yeats, for these before we “pass by”:

No man has ever lived that had enough
Of children’s gratitude or woman’s love.

And, “We poets would die of loneliness but for women, and we choose our men friends that we may have somebody to talk about women with.”

Now we’ve arrived at the last author I shall quote from the 9th Edition of my *Quotations*, H. G. Wells. From 1901, we have: “The past is but the beginning of a beginning, and all that is and has been is but the twilight of the dawn.” Yes, we humans are young upon the earth. The dinosaurs, dumb as they undoubtedly were, lasted, I’m told, quite a few billion years, and we’ve only walked upon the earth about a hundred thousand years. Yes, we here tonight are all very early members of the human race. But then the dinosaurs did not have their own explosives, which tempers our enthusiasm with a necessary caution. On with Wells, now: “Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe.” And, my final selection: “Life begins perpetually. Gathered together at last under the leadership of man... unified, disciplined, armed with the secret powers of the atom and with knowledge as yet beyond dreaming, Life, forever dying to be born afresh, forever young and eager, will presently stand upon this earth as upon a footstool, and stretch out its realm amidst the stars.”

Thank you for listening – and goodnight.

ACT III

It is the present, and we have on stage only a podium.
Our GUEST ACTOR enters, with the latest edition of *Barlett's Familiar Quotations*. He takes his place at the podium.

GUEST ACTOR

Good evening. The job has fallen to me to come after John Bartlett and attempt to do justice to the quotations that are included in the 17th or current edition of his *Familiar Quotations*. I will do the best I can to present them as I think he might have. I'll limit the selection to authors who wrote after John Bartlett's death in 1905.

(Opens the book; delivers first quote)

Let's begin in Presidential style, with one of the best to occupy that august position, Woodrow Wilson, at one of his most prescient moments, as he advocates a League of Nations. Apparently, his idealism was as yet unrestrained by experience with how much squabbling all the nations of the world, gathered in one place, can manage. Here he is: "A general association of nations must be formed... for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike."

Let's take a classic turn with Edith Hamilton, whose translation of Plato's complete works is my personal favorite. The quote is taken from her landmark book *The Greek Way*: "To rejoice in life, to find the world beautiful and delightful to live in, was a mark of the Greek spirit which distinguished it from all that had gone before. It is a vital distinction."

One Emile Chartier tells us, "Nothing is more dangerous than an idea, when it's the only one we have."

"Kin" Hubbard, a man who could mangle language with all the cleverness of Josh Billings, gives us: "When a fellow says it hain't the money but the principle o' the thing, it's th' money." And: "Now and then an innocent man is sent to the legislature."

Now, to Gandhi, with whom Martin Luther King was a fellow soul in the priority of nonviolent change. He said: "Nonviolence is the first article of my faith. It is also the last article of my creed." He was also shot to death. Why is it that the good are often killed – that their goodness creates a tide against evil, and evil strikes back, whereas evil

creates a tide against good, which does not shape itself into an assassin. We need to find a way to fix this mournful calamity.

Now, let's hear from two men with eyes that see. Here's Henri Matisse: "What interests me most is neither still life nor landscape, but the human figure. It is through it that I best succeed in expressing the almost religious feeling I have towards life."

Next, Frank Lloyd Wright, reveals a key to his way of working: "No house should ever be *on* any hill or on anything. It should be *of* the hill, belonging to it, so hill and house could live together each the happier for the other." And, "The physician can bury his mistakes, but the architect can only advise his client to plant vines."

The great Justice Benjamin Cardozo gave us: "Freedom of expression is the matrix, the indispensable condition, of nearly every other form of freedom."

And now we come to the most unusual combination of all, clear writing, philosophical sanity, and intellectual courage, with our great 20th Century sage, Bertrand Russell. This is from his *Skeptical Essays*: "It is undesirable to believe a proposition when there is no ground whatever for supposing it to be true." And from *An Outline of Intellectual Rubbish*: "Fear is the main source of superstition, and one of the main sources of cruelty. To conquer fear is the beginning of wisdom." Last, from his *Autobiography*: "Three passions, simple but overwhelmingly strong, have governed my life: the longing for love, the search for knowledge, and unbearable pity for the suffering of mankind."

Now for a lady, Willa Cather, from *O Pioneers!*: "I like trees because they seem more resigned to the way they have to live than other things do."

Here's Walter de la Mere, with a frightening big of doggerel for dieters:

It's a very odd thing –
As odd as can be –
That whatever Miss T. eats
Turns into Miss T.

Mark Fenderson throws up his arms with this cartoon caption for a dejected rooster: "What's the use? Yesterday an egg, tomorrow a feather duster."

Now, we come to that resilient and forthright pillar of determination and eloquence, Winston Churchill, and select: "Nothing in the world is so exhilarating as to be shot at without result." Here's a consolation and inspiration for all students who did not do well in school: "Be being so long in the lowest form [at Harrow] I gained an immense advantage over the cleverer boys.... I got into my bones the essential structure of the ordinary British sentence – which is a noble thing.... Naturally I am biased in favor of

boys learning English; I would make them all learn English; and then I would let the clever ones learn Latin as an honor, and Greek as a treat.” For those who haven’t read as much as they might but are still up for a crash course, he recommends the very book this wonderful evening is celebrating: “It is a good thing for an uneducated man to read books of quotations. *Bartlett’s Familiar Quotations* is an admirable work, and I studied it intently. The quotations when engraved upon the memory give you good thoughts. They also make you anxious to read the authors and look for more.” Well, an educated man might delve there, too, especially at bedtime when one is too tired to read much more than what might be called, lightly but not derisively, intellectual popcorn. Of course, there’s Churchill’s famous and resounding: “I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat.” Let us close with two of his greatest inspirations to the British people: “We shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender.” Finally, from him, “Let us... brace ourselves to our duties, and so bear ourselves that if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will say: “This was their finest hour.” What, only a thousand years?

On the cozy theme of what makes good neighbors, we take two snippets from Robert Frost’s mending wall: “Something there is that doesn’t love a wall.” And, at the culmination:

My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
He only says, “Good fences make good neighbors.”

Here are two caustic aphorisms from a Karl Kraus: “I and my public understand each other very well: it does not hear what I say, and I don’t say what it wants to hear.” And this jaunty comment on Doomsday: “When the end of the world comes, I want to be living in retirement.” Well, come if and when it may, let’s at least hope the universe does it to us, not we to ourselves.

Somerset Maugham addresses money for us, not once but twice: “There is nothing so degrading as the constant anxiety about one’s means of livelihood.... Money is like a sixth sense without which you cannot make a complete use of the other five.” Second, “If a nation values anything more than freedom, it will lose its freedom; and the irony of it is that if it is comfort or money that it values more, it will lose that, too.”

Thomas Mann goes to *The Magic Mountain* to inform us that “All interest in disease and death is only another expression of interest in life.” And from *The Beloved Returns*, “Hold fast the time! Guard it, watch over it, every hour, every minute! Unregarded it slips away, like a lizard, smooth, slippery, faithless, a pixy wife. Hold every moment

sacred. Give each clarity and meaning, each the weight of thine awareness, each its true and due fulfillment.”

Now we come to the great 20th Century humanitarian, Albert Schweitzer, and the day he discovered his ethic while floating down the Congo River: “Late on the third day, at the very moment when, at sunset, we were making our way through a herd of hippopotamuses, there flashed upon my mind, unforeseen and unsought, the phrase, “Reverence for Life.” It is admittedly like the legal Sanctity of Life, yet had the explosively ignorant inhabitants of this world more of both, how could they consider killing religion? One more quote from Schweitzer: “Affirmation of life is the spiritual act by which man ceases to live unreflectively and begins to devote himself to his life with reverence in order to raise it to its true value. To affirm life is to deepen, to make more inward, and to exalt the will to live.” I think he’s trying to tell us that our first worship ought to be the care of life, as it has been gifted.

On a lighter note, Wilson Mizner confesses, “To my embarrassment, I was born in bed with a lady.”

From Pope Pius XII, we get a praise of property we would have more expected from an economist: “Private property is a natural fruit of labor, a product of intense activity of man, acquired through his energetic determination to ensure and develop with his own strength his own existence and that of his family, and to create for himself and his own an existence of just freedom, not only economic, but also political, cultural and religious.”

Nancy Astor turns up her nose at men with, “I married beneath me. All women do.”

Now to the great 20th Century scientist and humanitarian, Albert Einstein. Let us take his foundational “ $E=mc^2$ ” for granted and go on to: “Concern for man himself and his fate must always form the chief interest of all technical endeavors, concern for the great unsolved problems of the organization of labor and the distribution of goods – in order that the creations of our mind shall be a blessing and not a curse to mankind. Never forget this in the midst of your diagrams and equations.” And, in his thinking of the unthinkable, a questionable hope: “I do not believe that civilization will be wiped out in a war fought with the atomic bomb. Perhaps two thirds of the people of the earth might be killed, but enough men capable of thinking, and enough books, would be left to start again, and civilization could be restored.” Really? Let’s hope we can spare ourselves that gruesome restart. Next, we have, “The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything save our modes of thinking, and we thus drift toward unparalleled catastrophes.” Finally, the simple thought, “Something deeply hidden had to be behind things.” I personally also like his appreciation of life, with “Every moment ... is a miracle.” Might we also know that.

How about a word from an artist, in this case, Georges Braque: “Art upsets, science reassures.” Apparently, he hadn’t read those bits from Einstein. So let’s give Georges another shot: “Truth exists, only falsehood has to be invented.”

Now, we come to our second Roosevelt, the stupendous F. D. R., who, with Churchill, became justice to Hitler and his henchmen. Here it is: “If I were asked to state the great objective which Church and State are both demanding for the sake of every man and woman and child in this country, I would say that great objective is ‘a more abundant life.’” Second, “We look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms. The first is freedom of speech and expression – everywhere in the world. The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way – everywhere in the world. The third is freedom from want ... everywhere in the world. The fourth is freedom from fear ... anywhere in the world.” Question is, can we bring these freedoms to people everywhere in the world? Mustn’t they appreciate them before they even desire them? Third for Roosevelt: “We have learned that we cannot live alone, at peace; that our own well-being is dependent on the well-being of other nations, far away. We have learned that we must live as men, and not as ostriches, not as dogs in the manger. We have learned to be citizens of the world, members of the human community.” This last quote from him is with his World War II ally, Winston Churchill, and is an article of the *Atlantic Charter*: “Eighth, they believe that all of the nations of the world, for realistic as well as spiritual reasons, must come to the abandonment of the use of force. Since no future peace can be maintained if land, sea or air armaments continue to be employed by nations which threaten, or may threaten, aggression outside of our frontiers, they believe, pending the establishment of a wider and permanent system of general security, that the disarmament of such nations is essential.”

John Maynard Keynes, the great economist, breaks out of his usual tranquilly analytic mindset to tell us: “Words ought to be a little wild for they are the assault of thoughts on the unthinking.”

Now one Joseph Schumpeter comes to the rescue of the entrepreneur, whose contribution the Marxists seem to have conveniently discounted: “Entrepreneurial profit... is the expression of the value of what the entrepreneur contributes to production in exactly the same sense that wages are the value expression of what the worker ‘produces.’ It is not a profit of exploitation any more than are wages.”

And from that heady brew, we turn for some welcome levity to S. J. Perelman, in a line written for the Marx Brothers’ movie, *Horse Feathers*. Said Groucho, “I’d horsewhip you if I had a horse.”

Now, let’s hear from the strong-willed Eleanor Roosevelt: “No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.” And, “You gain strength, courage and confidence by

every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, 'I lived through this horror. I can take the next thing that comes along.'... You must do the thing you think you cannot do."

Thence to a different kind of woman, the one and only Sophie Tucker, who gave us: "From birth to age eighteen, a girl needs good parents. From eighteen to thirty-five, she needs good looks. From thirty-five to fifty-five, she needs a good personality. From fifty-five on, she needs good cash." She was speaking from experience; she said that at age sixty-nine. Of course, she also gave us, "I have been poor and I have been rich. Rich is better."

Will Durant, the gentle and character-minded historian, intimates a caution to us, "Once more, in the great systole and diastole of history, an age of freedom ended and an age of discipline began." That from his volume *Caesar and Christ*, in his world history told in terms of, to borrow a phrase from Hegel, the "world-historical" people who make it. From the same volume, we have "A great civilization is not conquered from without until it has destroyed itself within. The essential causes of Rome's decline lay in her people, her morals, her class struggle, her failing trade, her bureaucratic despotism, her stifling taxes, her consuming wars."

Karen Horney gives experience a boost with, "Fortunately [psycho]analysis is not the only way to resolve inner conflicts. Life itself still remains a very effective therapist."

Redeeming the generally underappreciated economic force that's at the foundation of our personal freedom, Frank Knight tells us, "Market competition is the only form of organization which can afford a large measure of freedom to the individual." Yep, when the state owns your daily bread, how independent can you be, especially if you have the heart to be worried about you wife and kids?

Here are three quotes from D. H. Lawrence:

I never saw a wild thing
Sorry for itself.

Next, "Necessary, forever necessary, to burn out false shames and smelt the heaviest ore of the body into purity." Finally, "For man, as for flower and beast and bird, the supreme triumph is to be most vividly, most perfectly alive."

Now, here's a man, born 1886 and lived till 1971. Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court, Hugo Black, who includes in an opinion: "No higher duty, or more solemn responsibility, rests upon this Court than that of translating into living law and maintaining this constitutional shield deliberately planned and inscribed for the benefit of every human being subject to our Constitution – of whatever race, creed or persuasion." In another

opinion, he writes: “The First Amendment has erected a wall between church and state. That wall must be kept high and impregnable. We could not approve the slightest breach.” Would that such wisdom and integrity were a universal aspect of the justices appointed to that high place!

On another plane entirely, Isaac Goldberg tells us in rhyme:

Diplomacy is to do and say
The nastiest thing in the nicest way.

He seems to have neglected to tell us that some people actually seem to be able to do and say the nicest thing in the nastiest way.

This from the man who gave us one what has a fair chance of being the most life-demeaning phrase of all time, T. S. Eliot, at the start of *The Wasteland*: “April is the cruelest month...” Really? I’d rather not agree. Let’s move on to a couple of quotes from his *Four Quartets*. This one from *Burnt Norton, I*:

Footfalls echo in the memory
Down the passage which we did not take
Towards the door we never opened
Into the rose garden.

And from the quartet, *Little Gidding, V*, these famous lines:

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

Last, a bit of prose from his *Hamlet and His Problems*: “The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an “objective correlative”; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that *particular* emotion.” In case you don’t recognize the association right away, that’s the usual tactic of the classic American lyricists, such as Cole Porter, who gave us such objective correlatives to prove, for instance, in the song “You’re the Top!” that you are indeed “the Mona Lisa” and “the Tower of Pisa.”

Indicating the very obvious, Christopher Morley tells us:

There was so much writing on the wall
That even the wall fell down.

From Boris Pasternak, we have this wonderful sentiment: “Man is born to live, not to prepare for life. Life itself, the phenomenon of life, the gift of life, is so breathtakingly serious.” Amazing how long it has taken the human race to get to ideas like “the gift of

life.” Yet, in such appreciation, very likely resides our very natural salvation from the many reprehensible manifestations of self-inflicted evil.

Henry Miller goes on like this: “It’s good to be just plain happy; it’s a little better to know that you’re happy; but to understand that you’re happy and to know why and how...and still be happy, be happy in the being and the knowing, well that is beyond happiness, that is bliss.”

Robert Jackson sends down this opinion to us: “If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion or force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein.” One of the most winning things about Americans is that we do remain an inordinately cantankerous bunch, from the founding fathers right up through many a judgeship and many a so-called hayseed.

Archibald MacLeish writes, in *The American Cause*, what on some days seems more like an ideal than a reality: “Races didn’t bother the Americans. They were something a lot better than any race. They were a People. They were the first self-constituted, self-created People in the history of the world.”

From Edna St. Vincent Millay, this snippet of poetry on the difficulty of living by love alone:

Love is not all; it is not meat or drink
Nor slumber nor a roof against the rain;
Nor yet a floating spar to men that sink.

The comedian Fred Allen writes to his fellow of the same calling, Groucho Marx: “I have just returned from Boston. It is the only sane thing to do if you find yourself up there.” Allen also gives us a well-known quip that also found its way, by way of variation, into Will Rogers’ thinking: “California’s a wonderful place to live – if you happen to be an orange.” Rogers tells how California got to be so suddenly populous. Person went there and sent a friend back an orange. Recipient wanted one and headed west. Also, sent back an orange. So we’re amusingly told.

Now, we arrive pretty much at recent times, with this advice from Buckminster Fuller: “Don’t fight forces; use them.” Yep, sure would be a welcome relief if we figured out, for instance, how to get gravity to move things like our cars, instead of paying at the pump for gasoline.” He also advises us: “Nature is trying very hard to make us succeed, but nature does not depend on us. We are not the only experiment.” Yes, but we are part of its great spirit of life. The troubling question is, for how long and how healthily? Are we too smart, yet not quite smart enough? Guess we have to trust that nature gave us what we need.

This from Groucho Marx himself: “I never forget a face, but in your case I’ll make an exception.” And this unusual exclusionary policy: “Please accept my resignation. I don’t care to belong to any club that will accept me as a member.”

Here are two thoughts from Thornton Wilder, this from *Our Town*: “Oh, earth, you’re too wonderful for anybody to realize you.... Do any human beings ever realize life while they live it? – every, every minute?” And from *The Skin of Our Teeth*: “My advice to you is not to inquire why or whither, but just enjoy your ice cream while it’s on your plate – that’s my philosophy.”

C. S. Lewis comments on the passage of time, with: “The Future... something which everyone reaches at the rate of sixty minutes an hour, whatever he does, whoever he is.”

From Golda Maer, we have this plaintive plea: “We only want that which is given naturally to all peoples of the world, to be masters of our own fate, only of our fate, not of others, and in cooperation and friendship with others.” Why has this sentiment gone unheard?

From E. B. White let’s take this remarkable piece of prescience, from *Here is New York*, published in 1949: “The city, for the first time in its long history, is destructible. A single flight of planes no bigger than a wedge of geese can quickly end this island fantasy, burn the towers, crumble the bridges, turn the underground passages into lethal chambers, cremate the millions. The intimation of mortality is part of New York now: in the sound of jets overhead, in the black headlines of the latest edition.” Will wisdom ever be general enough of remove such fears and a great city like New York be seen by all the world as part of the common achievement of mankind, with benefactions for us all?

The talented and loquacious Thomas Wolfe wrote, in *The Web and the Rock*: “If a man has a talent and cannot use it, he has failed. If he has a talent and uses only half of it, he has partly failed. If he has a talent and learns somehow to use the whole of it, he has gloriously succeeded, and won a satisfaction and a triumph few men ever know.” Judging from the output, he did in his own terms gloriously succeed.

Margaret Mead laments: “We know of no culture that has said, articulately, that there is no difference between men and women except in the way they contribute to the creation of the next generation.”

B. F. Skinner’s impatience with our progress can be heard here: “The one fact that I would cry from every housetop is this: the Good Life is waiting for us – here and now!... At this very moment we have the necessary techniques, both material and psychological, to create a full and satisfying life for everyone.” Contrary to the usual wisdom, it seems that many bright people actually possess a unusually positive spirit of life.

Justice William J. Brennan, Jr., renders this: “If the right of privacy means anything, it is the right of the individual, married or single, to be free from unwarranted governmental intrusion into matters so fundamentally affecting a person as the decision whether to bear or beget a child.”

Here let’s take two ruminations from the poet Auden and, begging your forgiveness, both from his prose about poetry: “Speaking for myself, the questions which interest me most when reading a poem are two. The first is technical: ‘Here is a verbal contraption. How does it work?’ The second is, in the broadest sense, moral: ‘What kind of a guy inhabits this poem? What is his notion of the good life or the good place? His notion of the Evil One? What does he conceal from the reader? What does he conceal even from himself?’ And, second: “Whatever is actual content and overt interest, every poem is rooted in imaginative awe. Poetry can do a hundred and one things, delight, sadden, disturb, amuse, instruct – it may express every possible shade of emotion, and describe every conceivable kind of event, but there is only one thing that all poetry must do; it must praise all it can for being and for happening.”

This from Edward R. Murrow, in the face of McCarthyism: “We will not be driven by fear into an age of unreason if we... remember that we are not descended from fearful men, not from men who feared to write, to speak, to associate and to defend causes which were, for the moment unpopular.”

Here is the philosopher Isaiah Berlin, from *Two Concepts of Liberty*: “One belief, more than any other, is responsible for the slaughter of individuals on the altars of the great historical ideals.... This is the belief that somewhere, in the past or in the future, in divine revelation or in the mind of an individual thinker, in the pronouncements of history or science, or in the simple heart of an uncorrupted good man, there is a final solution.” Yes, we are finally all creatures of the earth, creatures of finitude, are we not?

David Riesman, from *The Lonely Crowd*: “While all people want and need to be liked by some of the people some of the time, it is only the modern other-directed types who make this their chief source of direction and chief area of sensitivity.” Sounds like just another love-omnivorous celebrity to me.

From Stephen Spender, how can we not take his famously stirring ode to excellence:

I think continually of those who were truly great...
The names of those who in their lives fought for life,
Who wore at their hearts the fire’s center.
Born of the sun they traveled a short while towards the sun,
And left the vivid air signed with their honor.

(notices how far we are into the book)

We are, it seems, nearing the end of our journey. Let's select a few more verbal wonders for our delectation. Here is economist Milton Friedman: "Freedom in economic arrangements is itself a component of freedom broadly understood, so economic freedom is an end in itself... Economic freedom is also an indispensable means toward the achievement of political freedom."

Popping over to France, we hear this from Camus: "Can one be a saint if God does not exist? That is the only concrete problem I know of today." I don't know, how about just being a good person?

Here's Lewis Thomas, who lived right up until 1993: "Viewed from the distance of the moon, the astonishing thing about the earth...is that it is alive.... Aloft, floating free beneath the moist, gleaming membrane of bright blue sky, is the rising earth, the only exuberant thing in this part of the cosmos.... It has the organized, self-contained look of a live creature, full of information, marvelously skilled in handling the sun." And, "We are a spectacular, splendid manifestation of life. We have language... We have affection. We have genes for usefulness, and usefulness is about as close to a "common goal" of nature as I can guess at. And finally, and perhaps best of all, we have music." I like that, except when I'm ill, and then I think classical music is one of the best modern medicines.

Sir Peter Medawar pats science on the back with, "The scientist values research by the size of its contribution to that huge, logically articulated structure of ideas which is already, thought not yet half built, the most glorious accomplishment of mankind."

These two bits of wit from the economist Paul Samuelson. On the risk-averse nature of the investment community: "Wall Street indexes predicted nine out of the last five recessions." And, for good measure: "Man does not live by GNP alone."

This rejoinder by Florynce Rae Kennedy, as noted by Gloria Steinem: "If men could get pregnant, abortion would be a sacrament."

Here's a reconciling thought from John Kennedy, who we all knew too well and mourned very hard. On becoming a hero during World War II: "It was involuntary. They sank my boat." And this accommodation to the often seemingly immalleable face of reality: "If we cannot end now our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity."

Now, from Nelson Mandela: "I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons will live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and achieve. But, if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am

prepared to die.” He made that statement in the dock. Also: “I am not truly free if I am taking away someone else’s freedom, just as surely as I am not free when my freedom is taken away from me. The oppressed and the oppressor alike are robbed of their humanity.”

From the sadly slain Anwar al-Sadat, one of the first victims of that ignorant medieval carryover, used to enslave and explode the innocent, Muslim extremism: “Peace is much more precious than a piece of land.” And, on signing the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty in Washington: “Let there be no more war or bloodshed between Arabs and Israelis. Let there be no more suffering or denial of rights. Let there be no more despair or loss of faith.” No wonder the idiotic connivers killed him. Another man just too good for evil to allow to survive. Maybe we need better bodyguards for such people.

The contemporary theorist Daniel Bell gives us this wry comparison: “Capitalism, it is said, is a system wherein man exploits man. And communism – is vice versa.”

This from Doris Lessing: “A woman without a man cannot meet a man, any man, of any age, without thinking, even if it’s for a half-second, Perhaps this is *the* man.” And, shall we also say of this, vice versa?

Here is Pope John Paul II, on a visit to the Synagogue of Rome: “You are our dearly beloved brothers, and in a certain way, it could be said that you are our elder brothers.” Two thousand years later and still counting.

John Paul Stevens, offering his dissenting opinion in *Bush v. Gore*: “Although we may never know with complete certainty the identity of the winner of this year’s presidential election, the identity of the loser is perfectly clear. It is the nation’s confidence in the judge as an impartial guardian of the rule of law.”

Stewart Udall, in his *The Quiet Crisis*, tells us: “A land ethic for tomorrow should be as honest as Thoreau’s *Walden*, and as comprehensive as the sensitive science of ecology. It should stress the oneness of our resources and the live-and-help-live logic of the great chain of life. If, in our haste to “progress,” the economics of ecology are disregarded by citizens and policy makers alike, the result will be an ugly America.” Perhaps, also a half-dead one.

Here is the Russian nuclear scientist Andrei Sakharov, letting us know why, during much of his life, he was very visibly at odds with the Kremlin: “Intellectual freedom is the only guarantee of a scientific-democratic approach to politics, economic development, and culture.”

As we near the end, let's take this from the playwright John Osborne: "Oh heavens, how I long for a little ordinary human enthusiasm. Just enthusiasm – that's all. I want to hear a warm, thrilling voice cry out Hallelujah! Hallelujah! I'm alive." That from *Look Back in Anger*.

Right before we conclude, let us dwell briefly with that generous contributor, *Anonymous*, who gave us the deceptively simple but perhaps greatest and most immediately sharable ethic of all: "Live and let live."

With that, may I bid you a fond good night. And may some of the familiar quotes you've heard tonight, as part of the legacy of the encyclopedic John Bartlett, vibrate in your memory – console, enlighten, and inspire you, as they no doubt did the man to whom we owe the evening's wit and enlightenment. Good night!

The End